

Guardian

Friday March 6 1998

Abu Dhabi D 50	Greece D 50	Qatar OR 100
Albania US 2	Hong Kong US 25	Pakistan R 80
Andorra FR 10	Hungary P 20	Poland C 80
Angola AS 30	Iceland IS 10	Portugal E 20
Bahrain BD 9.85	Israel IS 11.50	Romania R 50
Belgium BE 70	Italy L 500	Saudi Arabia R 10
Bulgaria BG 70	Kenya ZH 150	Slovenia SL 250
Canada CA 9.85	Kuwait KD 50	Spain P 250
Croatia HR 12.50	Latvia LV 50	Sweden SK 10
Cyprus CY 1.00	Lebanon LB 2000	Switzerland SF 50
Czech Republic KCS	Lithuania LT 65	Taiwan TW 1000
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# The Guardian

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INTERNATIONAL

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Decca Aitkenhead

## Business as usual

This section, page 12

# Water on the Moon — our passport to the planets



Stepping stone... the Moon could provide a fuelling station between Earth and the planets

PHOTOGRAPH: FRANK ZULLOW

Tim Radford  
Science Editor

**A** MERICAN space scientists last night astonished the world with the discovery of a huge store of frozen water on the Moon. The find by the space agency Nasa opens the way for human settlement of the Earth's nearest neighbour.

It also makes the Moon available as a kind of petrol station on the road towards deeper exploration of space. Water is made of hydrogen and oxygen, the two constituents of the costly rocket fuel that limits the range of existing spacecraft designs.

Dr Alan Binder, chief scientist behind the Lunar Prospector robot spaceprobe which began orbiting the Moon in January, said: "We have the first unquestionable results indicating that there are significant quantities of water at both lunar poles."

"The implications are tremendous. For the first time, we can go to a planetary body and we can fuel up. That fuel can be used to go to Mars and elsewhere in the solar system."

Apollo astronauts mapped 20 per cent of the Moon before Nasa cancelled the programme in 1973. They reported that it was as dry as concrete. The Moon rotates once every 28 days, each solar day lasting 14 Earth days and scientists calculated that any water in the soil would blister into space.

In 1994, however, a tiny experimental military satellite called Clementine flew past the Moon and reported mysterious hints of ice — possibly delivered by crashing comets — trapped in the cold dark shadows of craters at one of the poles. For the first time in two decades, the Moon mattered again.

The location is vital: most of the Moon is in frozen darkness for 14 Earth days every 28 days. But solar panels at the poles could make electricity at all times. Nasa scientists picked up a university proposal and fitted out a dust-bin-sized spaceprobe packed with sophisticated instruments. The mission has up to a year to run. But within



'This shows the Moon is a stepping stone right there and calling us'

Rick Tumlinson, the Frontier Foundation

weeks neutron detectors had "counted" up to 300 million metric tons — the equivalent of a lake 36ft deep and four miles square, surviving as ice in the top yards of lunar soil.

The discovery could kick-start a new rush of interest in the exploration and exploitation of what became known during the Apollo programme as the high frontier. Construction is to begin later this year on an \$18 billion international orbiting space station. It will take years, an epic number of rocket launches, and hundreds of hours of work in freefall.

United States and Japanese engineers have planned lunar factories and lunar hotels. Even European scientists have had their eyes on the Moon as a permanent base. Britain's own AEA Technology yesterday conceded that it had already investigated the possibility of commercial

exploiting lunar resources. Matra Marconi Space (MMS) in Britain and other big companies have been working with the European Space Agency on a programme called EuroMoon2000, to drop a robot on the lunar surface, and eventually put a manned team of explorers there.

"We are not only keen on the project, we have actually supported it from MMS funds," said a company spokesman, Mike Dandy, last night.

But the limiting factor has been water. The average adult male is composed of more than 70 pints of water, and needs to top up by at least four or five pints each day. A lunar base would need water for its greenhouses and to cement its own structure. The Nasa discovery removes two barriers to a Moon settlement: it provides the means of survival and a source of fuel.

The first uses are likely to be scientific. The far side of the Moon would be a perfect site for an observatory, and a lunar base would also be a cheap launch platform in one-sixth of Earth's gravity.

Dr Richard Crowther, of the Defence Evaluation and Research Agency at Farnborough, said yesterday that even rough calculations showed that it would be cheaper to make rocket fuel on the Moon than lift it from the Earth. "It makes the whole thing more economic, and opens up space for many more applications than we can currently envisage."

And Rick Tumlinson, of the Space Frontier Foundation in New York, a campaigner who first worked on the Lunar Prospector proposal at Princeton University, said: "This shows us the Moon is basically right there as a stepping stone, and calling to us. I used to say in my talks that if God had wanted humanity to go into space, He or She would have given us a moon. And they did."

### More awards for the Guardian

The Guardian capped one of its most successful years last night with a raft of honours at the British Press Awards.

The Guardian won:

The Team Reporting Award for its investigation into the affairs of Jonathan Aitken and victory in the libel battle against him.

"The title goes to a team whose dogged journalistic persistence uncovered enough irrefutable evidence to send shockwaves throughout Whitehall."

Feature Writer of the Year: Nick Davies

"For sheer integrity, tenacity and outstanding narrative flow in reporting drug and child abuse."

Young Journalist of the Year: Libby Brooks

"The award goes to a clear-thinking, colourful and mature young writer."

Newspaper of the Year was won by the Daily Mail for its "all round consistent performance". The Guardian was praised as runner-up.

"The judges thought it was important to commend one national newspaper for what they called the courage, initiative and sheer excellence demonstrated throughout the year."

Our sister paper, the Observer, also received awards for the financial journalist of the year, won by Ben Laurant, and columnist of the year, awarded posthumously.

## Masons surrender over names

Submission of list linked to police scandals avoids risk of contempt

Duncan Campbell  
Crime Correspondent

**T**HE Freemasons yesterday finally surrendered the names of members whose identity had been sought by Parliament in connection with police scandals, rather than face imprisonment for contempt.

But their most senior officials expressed disquiet at the disclosure, which they described as an erosion of long-established rights that boded ill for the country.

One of Britain's most secret bodies had until yesterday to identify which of the 161 names connected with the now disbanded West Midlands serious crime squad had been Freemasons. They had been ordered to do so by Chris Mullin MP, the chairman of the Commons home affairs committee, which is inquiring into freemasonry in

the police and the judiciary. As the deadline loomed, 16 names were sent to Mr Mullin. He has already said that the names will not be made public or even released to other members of the committee. It is understood that only Mr Mullin and the clerk of the committee will be privy to the list.

The 16 masons' names "seemed" to match names on the committee's list of 161 connected with the serious crimes squad inquiry, said the grand secretary of the United Grand Lodge of England, Michael Higham. But he could not confirm that all 16 were the same as those on the list. Some were not in touch with their lodges or former lodges, he said, so consent to disclose their names could not be obtained. Others had said they would only consent if they knew what they were accused of.

In a letter to Mr Mullin, Mr

Higham wrote: "The information is provided because the [home affairs] committee is exercising its power to compel disclosure."

He said the board of general purposes of the United Grand Lodge was "extremely uncomfortable about this compulsion and has been reluctant to provide the information because, in its view, the committee's inquiry is an invasion of the privacy of the men concerned, who have not consented to their names being disclosed."

He added: "In supplying the information, the board relies on the assurances which you have given that you will keep it confidential to yourself and that the names will not be disclosed to any third party."

Mr Higham later added that the board would write to the Prime Minister, the Lord Chancellor and the Home Secretary "to express its concern that long-established rights of lawful associations and individuals are being challenged and eroded in a country which has always prided itself on its diversity and its

tolerance and in which the right to privacy and natural justice seemed natural". One of the members of the committee, Labour MP David Winnick, welcomed the compliance with the order.

"I'm very pleased that common sense has prevailed," he said. "It's unfortunate that it needed the committee to issue the order to them."

Mr Winnick, MP for Wallasey North, rebutted any suggestion that the committee was persecuting the Freemasons in any way, and said he recognised that people had a right to belong to such an organisation in a democratic society.

Mr Mullin indicated that the committee would discuss the issue when it meets on Tuesday.

He had not known until yesterday whether or not the Freemasons would comply with last month's order. Had they failed to do so they faced the risk of imprisonment for contempt of Parliament, the first time such a power would have been used in such circumstances.

## Camelot backs new lottery game

Julia Finch

**A** NEW football-related lottery game is to be launched by Camelot, the National Lottery on Camelot's 24,000 computer terminals.

In line with National Lottery rules, the same proportion of every pound spent on the new football gambling game will be donated to good causes and 50 per cent of the cash wagered will be returned as prizes.

After all deductions Camelot said its profit margin would be only 1.2 per cent, but chief executive Peter George said that would still ensure the company made a handsome profit. "Anyone involved in the lottery is in it for a profit," he said.

The plan — which is now being considered by lottery regulator, Oflot — has the support of Camelot, which

would receive a commission for every football ticket sold.

National Lottery rules dictate that 28p in every pound must be donated to good causes. The cash is then split between charities, heritage, sport, arts, the Millennium Commission and the Government's New Opportunities Fund.

Camelot would have to return half the cash as prizes and 12p in every pound would be deducted for tax. The ticket sellers would get 5 per cent of football ticket sales and Camelot would also receive a fee. The betting shop group would have to make a payment to the Football Trust, as pools companies do.

Mr George said the company hoped to start the game in August at the start of the football season. It will be based on football results.

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## Inside

**Britain**

Women over the age of 45 make up a fifth of the UK population but their health needs tend to be ignored, a study shows.

8

**World**

The CIA has been training Palestinian Authority security forces in the arts of interrogation, espionage and other techniques.

10

**Finance**

The Bank of England kept interest rates on hold after a top Gordon Brown aide said the Budget will keep the squeeze on the economy.

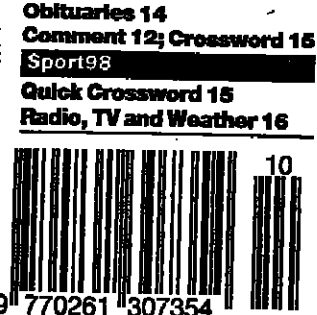
16

**Sport**

Nigel Spackman, who quit as manager of Sheffield United on Tuesday, would soon be back in charge at Bramall Lane.

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## Sketch

## Redwood spiked by hedgehog



Simon Hoggart

IT SHOULD be so easy for John Redwood. There he is, a fellow of All Souls, previous head of the Downing Street policy unit, the author of innumerable books with titles such as *Equity For Everyman*, *Public Enterprise*, *For My Sins*, *Sweetie* (I made the last one up), a former challenger for the Tory leadership, a man who ought to be known far and wide as "Three Brains", pitted against the homely figure of Margaret Beckett, whose idea of a grand time is popping her caravan into a layby and brewing up a cuppa.

It ought to be a doddle for him, as if Stephen Hawking were to go on Mastermind against Hyacinth Bucket — specialist subject: Origins of the Universe.

But somehow it isn't. Somehow it always seems to go wrong. One reason is that Mrs Beckett, for all the jibes about caravans, is one smart cookie, and for a politician, a year in the House is worth a first-class Oxford degree.

Another is that she has a secret weapon. The secret weapon is Ian McCartney, the Labour member for Makerfield, a junior minister in Mrs Beckett's ministry. In short, resourceful, roly-poly, dark and prickly, and should be called Sonic. The Hedgehog.

Trade questions yesterday started quietly, with the usual new jargon for us all to learn. Apparently some of industry's problems are "ringgit-related", which isn't a painful complaint from eating too much vindaloo, but concerns the collapse of the Malaysian currency. Then there is the "Sark lark", not a drunken jolly to that lovely island, but a means of dodging British accountancy laws.

Next we learned from the science minister, John Birt, that Britain was involved in the quest for water on the

Moon, which, if they find it in time, might help the hapless customers of Yorkshire Water this summer.

Then Mr McCartney got his chance. He was asked a question on corporate governance. He usually starts quietly, and you can make out much of what he says. "Inish" means "initiate", "pashy" is "partnership" and "noney" means "non-executive directors". Problems start when he speeds up.

Mr Redwood rose. Unable to attack the organ-grinder, he went for the hedgehog. He sarcastically hailed a U-turn by Mrs Beckett on stakeholding, and suddenly swerved to demand that she wind up her blind trust — "which she has had since May 1".

The hedgehog curled into a ball and rolled angrily at him. Had he had the Leader of the Opposition's permission to ask that question? (This was a reference to Mr Redwood's complaint about the Corporation of the City of London making Helmut Kohl a Freeman of the City — a remark for which he was rebuked by William Hague.)

Mr McCartney was only warming up. "You are a complete joke, nashy and inter-nashy." (Rather improbable, I thought, as politicians' peccadilloes go, it's not quite the same as Bill Clinton's sex life. I doubt if they tell the latest John Redwood jokes round the camp fires of Papua New Guinea.)

"It's your shambolic attitude! You owe the House an apology. Chancellor Kohl — a man and his country who have invested millions of pounds in this country and created tens of thousands of jobs."

Mr Redwood murmured that his views were unexceptional and had been well received. "You obviously don't talk to the Leader of the Opposition. He has repudiated you."

"Repudiated!" sneered a few Tories, delighted that for once Mr McCartney had actually made a word longer than it used to be. Mr Redwood did return, and asked Mrs Beckett herself a question. But he looked wounded and defeated. His encounter with Mr McCartney had taken the life out of him, a rare example of a hedgehog slinking someone in the fast lane.

Decision aimed at getting republicans back into peace process while meeting Unionist demands

## Blair to see Adams on talks

Brian MacAskill, Chief Political Correspondent

TONY BLAIR agreed yesterday to meet the Sinn Féin president, Gerry Adams, at Downing Street next week to help to bring the republican movement back into the peace talks.

Mr Blair's decision balances the demands of Sinn Féin and the Ulster Unionists. The Unionists had warned Mr Blair not to meet Mr Adams until after his two-week suspension had ended, on Monday, while Sinn Féin said it would not return to the talks until it had met Mr Blair.

The Government and Sinn Féin were in touch last night to try to fix a date. Downing Street suggested Thursday, but Mr Adams is due to fly to New York and Washington the previous day for fundraising and political meetings based around St Patrick's Day celebrations.

Sinn Féin demanded the meeting with Mr Blair as a face-saving measure and as an opportunity to try to win promises from him over policing, prisoners and constitutional issues.

It could be three weeks before Sinn Féin rejoins the talks, in spite of the British and Irish governments' accelerating the timetable for reaching a deal. The Northern Ireland Secretary, Mo Mowlam, met the Irish foreign minister, David Andrews, in Dublin yesterday and expressed optimism about a settlement.

The need for urgency in reaching a deal was reinforced by the murders of Philip Allen, a Protestant, and his Catholic friend Damien Trainor, in Poyntzpass, Co Armagh, on Tuesday. Three men arrested on Tuesday and a fourth arrested last night are being questioned about the murders.

A requiem mass will be held for Trainor at St Joseph's Church in Poyntzpass at noon today. Allen's funeral will take place later at Poyntzpass Presbyterian Church to allow villagers to attend both services.

Sinn Féin was expelled from the talks a fortnight ago. The Ulster Unionists had warned Mr Blair not to agree to Mr Adams' request for a meeting until its expulsion period was over.

Ken Maginnis, the Ulster Unionist security spokesman, expressed relief that the meeting would take place after Sinn Féin's expulsion had ended but said the decision to have a meeting at all was foolish. "I am afraid there is still some degree of wishful thinking as far as the administration and indeed the Prime Minister is concerned."

"They believe that somehow Sinn Féin want to be part of a political settlement. Those of us who come from

Northern Ireland know that that is not the case."

The loyalist Ulster Democratic Party, which had also been temporarily ejected from the talks, welcomed Mr Blair's decision to delay the meeting until after Sinn Féin's suspension had ended.

The Prime Minister's official spokesman, speaking yesterday after Mr Blair spoke to the Irish prime minister, Bertie Ahern, said: "The Prime Minister is likely to respond soon to Gerry Adams' request for a meeting. We do not expect the meeting to take place before the second half of next week."

He added that it would be more likely to be Thursday than Wednesday.

A BBC poll in Northern Ireland, while recording much pessimism about a successful outcome to the talks, had several hopeful findings, chiefly that three-quarters of nationalists would be prepared to settle for less than a united Ireland.

A further breakdown of the figures by party allegiance indicated that just over half of Sinn Féin supporters would be prepared to accept such an outcome, as would nine out of 10 SDLP voters.

The survey shows a 55 per cent to 45 per cent split within the Protestant community in favour of the Ulster Unionist leader, David Trimble, taking part in face-to-face talks with republicans.

## Inquiry called into mobile phone 'rip off'

Chris Barrie

THE cost of calling mobile phones is set to fall dramatically following accusations from the official watchdog that the industry has "ripped off" consumers.

In a farewell onslaught before stepping down at the end of the month, Ofcom director general Don Cruickshank ordered a Monopolies and Mergers Commission inquiry into charges levied by Vodafone, Cellnet and BT.

He is demanding that the cost of calling the 8 million mobile phones in Britain be cut by a third to 20 pence a minute, and he is also unhappy about other charges, such as the 30p a minute levied when callers get through to a recorded message.

Mr Cruickshank said he was concerned people often had no idea they were calling a mobile phone and therefore were unaware they would be charged premium rates.

The announcement provoked a furious row with the industry. One executive accused Mr Cruickshank of moving the goalposts in talks and forcing an MMC referral so as to win publicity as he prepared to step down.

Mr Cruickshank wants the cost of calling a mobile during the day to be cut from the current level of 32p, more than five times the equivalent cost of a fixed line.

The tariff for calling a mobile is charged by BT and calculated according to agreements reached between it and the mobile firms. Of the 32p, BT takes 6.9p, while Vodafone and Cellnet receive 19p. Ofcom wants to cut BT's share to 4p, in line with its charge for ordinary fixed calls, while the two mobile operators would be left with 12.7p.

Some 5 billion minutes of calls to mobile phones were made last year, with the figure rising at 40 per cent a year as mobile phones become more widely used.

Despite a two-year wrangle with the industry, Mr Cruickshank said he had been un-



Mobile phones held by a worker in the City of London yesterday and the trader depicted in a bronze statue there

PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL VICENTE

able to persuade it to lower charges far or fast enough.

Mr Cruickshank expects the MMC inquiry to examine the whole structure of charges and cross-subsidy. He said the impact of his price cuts could slash up to £200 million from mobile phone company revenues.

The announcement stunned the City, which had been expecting the industry to reach an agreement with Ofcom on price cuts, and sent shares in most telecoms firms tumbling. One analyst said BT, a shareholder in Cellnet, could ultimately lose £326 million a year in revenues.

Vodafone chief executive Chris Gent accused the watchdog of seeking publicity. He said: "The normal, reasoned and impartial approach to regulation has been abandoned."

Mr Gent said charges had already been cut dramatically, and the MMC inquiry could delay other price cuts in the pipeline. BT criticised Mr Cruickshank for not discussing ways of amending the charges without the MMC being involved. Its prices had already reduced "substantially".

Although the two other mobile phone operators, Orange and One2One, were excluded from the MMC inquiry, Mr Cruickshank warned that his officials would examine their charges when they are renegotiated with BT next month.

## French magistrate to question Al Fayed on conspiracy claim

Jon Hensley in Paris

HARRODS owner Mohamed Al Fayed, whose son Dodi died in the Paris car crash that killed Diana, Princess of Wales, will be questioned for the first time next week by the investigating magistrate in charge of the case.

"Mr Al Fayed will come to Paris on March 12 and answer the magistrate's questions," his lawyer, Georges Kleiman, said yesterday. "He intends to express his confidence in the handling of the investigation."

French justice sources confirmed that the investigating magistrate, Hervé Stéphan, had written to request the interview soon after Mr Al Fayed said he was "99.9 per cent certain" the August 31 crash was the result of a conspiracy.

They also said Judge Stéphan would this afternoon again question Trevor Rees-Jones, the bodyguard who was the sole survivor of the accident in the Pont de l'Alma underpass. Mr Rees-Jones, who has suffered from partial amnesia since, said recently he was beginning to remember more of what happened.

He has said he now recalls Diana being conscious immediately after the accident, and that Henri Paul, the driver of the Mercedes, did not appear to be having been drinking.

Judge Stéphan is obliged to inform Mr Al Fayed, who is a civil party to the investigation, about its progress. But he is also likely to ask him about the findings of his own private investigation into the crash, headed by a retired police commissioner, Pierre Ottavio.

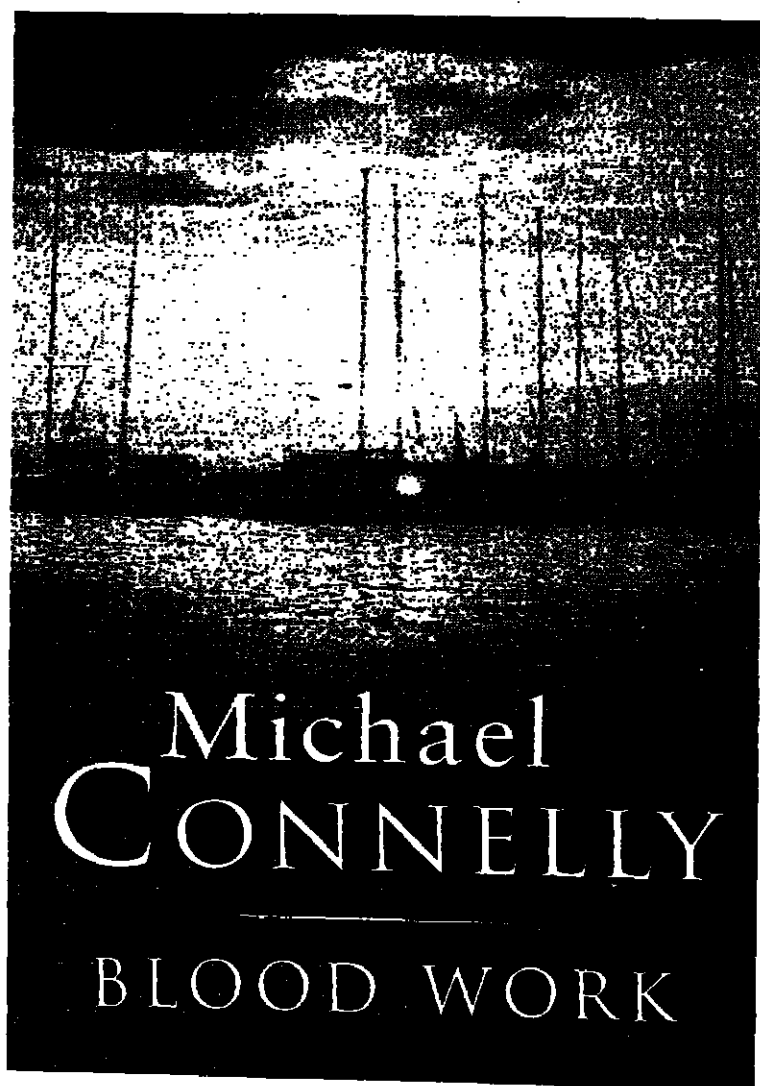
"He's going to want to know whether Al Fayed has anything to support his remarks about a conspiracy," one investigator said.

The magistrate may also question Mr Al Fayed about security arrangements at his Ritz hotel, and Paul's character. There has been speculation that the princess's estate may sue the Paris hotel, which leased the black Mercedes and employed Paul as the deputy security chief.

After six months of investigation, French police and justice officials believe the main causes of the crash were excessive speed, and the fact that Paul was three times over the drink-driving limit.

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## Review

## Passionate look at closed world

Michael Billington

In *A Little World Of Our Own* Donmar Warehouse

WE RECOIL in horror from the latest deeds of the loyalist gunmen. But what do we know of the paramilitaries and the Protestant hard men? It is an area surprisingly few plays tackle. But Gary Mitchell's *A Little World Of Our Own*, which has just won the Best New Play trophy in the inaugural Irish Theatre Awards, goes some way towards repairing the gap and explaining the ethos of violence.

Mitchell's play, set on the Rathcoole estate in north Belfast, focuses on three brothers in one particular family. Ray is the iron man clearly involved with the loyalist paramilitaries, Richard is the retarded youngest of whom he is insanely protective, and somewhere in the middle is insurance salesman Gordon, who simply wants to set up home with his devout fiancée.

The crisis comes when a 15-year-old girl who has been two-timing the backward Richard with a despised "Taig" is found badly beaten and subsequently dies. Suspicion clearly points at someone in this troubled family.

Mitchell uses a thriller format to expose the hermetic nature of the loyalist community, one in which primal hatred of Catholics and of political peace-seekers blends with a sacred attitude to family. Ray, the protagonist, is driven both by a hectic fraternal love and by an unstoppable lust for revenge on anyone who consorts with a Taig.

Mitchell's point is that you cannot understand the loyalist culture unless you grasp this fierce, complex duality.

Not everything in the play works: Mitchell makes too easy sport of the dithering Gordon and his deeply Christian fiancée who believes in the power of prayer. What he does capture vividly is the way worship of the family is translated into a sectarian principle and a kind of perverted virility transmitted from one generation to the next. Ray's ultimate triumph is to pass on to Richard his belief in violent solutions.

Mitchell is clearly a skilful dramatist with a lot to tell us about the closed-in loyalist culture. My feeling, having read the script, is that Robert Delamere's production for The Foundry pushes the play too far in the direction of factional excitement. Every line is delivered at fever pitch, and at the climax it is hard to believe that a badly wounded man would be capable of *sfarzando* bellowing.

But the play, which opens the Donmar's Foundry new writing season and runs until Saturday, is well worth catching. Stuart Graham as the vengefully macho Ray, Lorcan Cranitch as a survival-conscious middle-man, and Helen McCrory as the devout Deborah survive the over-strenuous production.

Mitchell opens up a window on a closed world in which sectarian hatred mingles with a rooted belief in the household gods. It does not give one much hope for the peace process but it makes for strong and passionate drama.

This review appeared in later editions yesterday.

## In The Week tomorrow

## Road rage and me

Martin Amis confesses all about his addiction to driving fast

## Man who saved the world

Kofi Annan tells Roy Hattersley about his Baghdad mission

Plus Simon Hoggart's Week



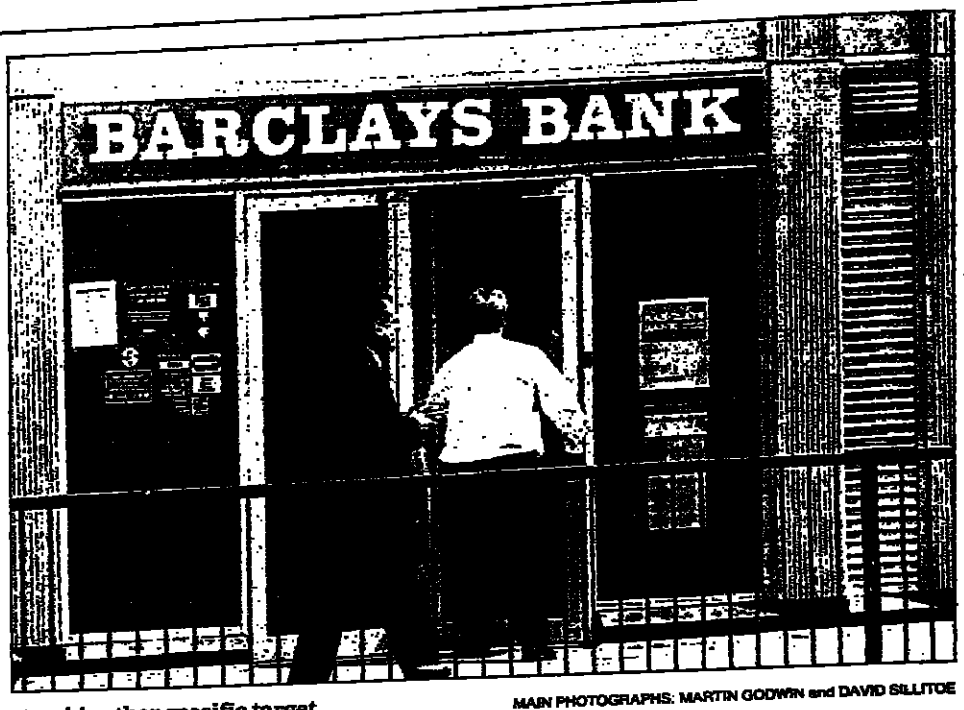




## 4 BRITAIN



The 'Mardi Gra' bomber has now struck 33 times with devices that could kill. Duncan Campbell on why he has not been caught



Left, the bomber's calling card found after an attack at a branch of Barclays Bank, and, centre, his other specific target

## Police still frustrated in the hunt for serial bomber

**T**HE head of the anti-terrorist branch, Commander John Grieve, yesterday issued a warning that the 'Mardi Gra' bomber could kill if he or she was not caught.

A device which exploded near a Sainsbury store in south-east London on Wednesday night injured a 17-year-old youth who was said to be stable in hospital yesterday.

The incident, in Forest Hill, was the 33rd of the attacks which started in December, 1994. The teenager was hit as he walked past a black plastic bag. The device, consisting of a shotgun cartridge and a timer, is similar to those employed previously.

Mr Grieve said that officers from the anti-terrorist branch and the organised crime group were now exploring a

number of angles. He appealed for anyone who might know the identity of the bomber to come forward. More than £1 million has now been spent in the hunt since the first blast 40 months ago. What is puzzling is how one person has managed to evade Europe's most experienced anti-terrorist branch and a police force of 27,000.

The police admit that the hunt has been one of the most

frustrating of recent years and say it is only a matter of time before someone is seriously injured or killed. Detectives would have hoped for clues from three possible sources: closed circuit television; traces from the devices or from the threats the bomber has sent; or tip-offs from relatives, neighbours or acquaintances — the way that the American 'Unabomber' was eventually

found when a relative informed on him.

The bomber's ability to evade detection by the closed circuit television cameras raised the possibility that he or she — could be a former or serving police officer. The fact that no clues have been left on any of the devices also pointed to someone with anti-surveillance training. Some stations have even briefed their officers that this is a

possibility so that they do not discount any potential suspects.

A senior Scotland Yard source said: "If the question is asked — could it be a police officer — the answer is yes, it could. But it could also be a crime reporter or a nurse or anyone with that level of sophistication." There was no clue to the bomber's profession.

With the IRA ceasefire in

London holding, the police now have the resources to devote to tracking the culprit, who is clearly getting great satisfaction from eluding the police for so long.

What has puzzled police is that the bomber is neither making any money nor any political point. Despite firstly Barclays Bank and then Sainsbury being specifically targeted, no money has been paid by either and no evidence of a possible grudge against either company has emerged.

If either a financial or a political motive appeared, it would at least offer a further line to pursue. Rodney Wit-

chelo, the former police officer who carried out an extensive extortion campaign and was jailed in 1990 for 17 years, was caught when he tried to get his money from an automatic teller machine.

The police's best hope is that the bomber eventually becomes anxious for more recognition and seeks to taunt them further. Commander Grieve said that the police were very concerned because the devices had the capacity to "wound, injure or kill".

They know it could be a long haul. One senior officer said: "It was 18 years before they taught the Unabomber."

## Mother-in-law no longer butt of camp jokes

Sarah Hall

**H**EARD the one about the mother-in-law who talks through her nose? — her mouth's worn out. Or the one about the mother-in-law who's fat? — they're holding a sponsored walk around her.

Or about the mother-in-law with a new job? — kick-starting a jumbo jet.

Well, you won't any more at least at Butlin's — because the company with which they are forever associated yesterday announced that it no longer found them funny.

Instead the politically incorrect one-liners will be replaced by more off-the-wall, alternative humour. From April to October, some 20 up and coming comedians from Jongleurs, the London comedy club which showcased Ben Elton, Rory Bremner and Jack Dee, will troop twice weekly to Skegness, Minehead and Bognor Regis as part of a £139 million bid by Butlin's to spruce up its image.

Yesterday, the company denied old-style humour was being shelved because it was sexist and offensive. But it admitted mother-in-law jokes had become outdated in the late 1990s.

The company's director of entertainment, Kyron Jessan, said: "We realise that mother-in-law jokes — and one-line gags — are the

comedy of yesteryear, whereas the new wave comedy of the type shown at Jongleurs is what younger people in particular have come to expect.

"Many leading comedians like Dave Allen and Les Dennis got their break with us. But humour changes and we need to stay ahead of the times."

Maria Kempinska, who founded Jongleurs in 1983, described the Butlin's action as "very brave".

She added: "We threw down the comedy gauntlet 15 years ago and Butlin's have now picked it up. They've done absolutely the right thing to update their image, go up-market and bring in a younger group of people."

Jongleurs veteran Jenny Eclair — star of Channel 5's Comedy Works — said: "I'd kill to do Butlin's — and I wouldn't do a mother-in-law joke, because my boyfriend's mum would kill me."

"Having said that, you can't outlaw mother-in-law jokes. It's like a red rag to a bull. It makes me want to go away and write a 20 minute sketch full of them."

But Jenny Eclair also had a warning for Butlin's. "It makes me really laugh to think they believe modern stand-up comedians may be inoffensive. Some of the newer female comedians have taken up the mantle of Roy 'Chubby' Brown, or Bernard Manning."

## Missing youth thought to be in Gambia

Owen Bowcott

**A**SCHOOLBOY who hit the headlines three years ago when he ran away to Malaysia with his father's passport and credit card, has gone missing again. Peter Kerry (above), aged 17, has raised suspicions that he is in west Africa, which could cost him a scholarship worth nearly £30,000 to a leading private college.

Leaflets about Gambia, in west Africa, were reportedly found in his bedroom. Harrow school, north London, where he won a place last year to study A levels on the newly created John Lyon scholarship, has said he may have to forfeit the award when he returns.

"The whole question of his future here will be up for consideration," Nicholas Bomford, the headmaster, said yesterday. Forfeiture of the scholarship was a possibility, but the school needed to know

the circumstances surrounding his absence. It is thought that Peter may have been unhappy at the school. "I hope he is wise enough to come home and sort this out," Mr Bomford added.

His parents, John and Pat Kerry, who live near the school in Harrow, do not know whether he has taken his passport or any money.

"This is a bit of a setback, more for him than for us," said his father, who is recovering from a cancer operation.

Mr Kerry, who works for a courier firm near Heathrow airport, paid for Peter to go on a 10-week trip to Australia, South-east Asia and eastern Europe as a reward for obtaining eight As and two Bs in his GCSEs.

"We hoped that would get it out of his system, but there seems to be no end to it," Mr Kerry said. "I've got great confidence in the boy. He's been all over the place and he's not come a cropper yet."



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# U-turn claims on meat report

Sarah Boseley and James Melde

**T**HE Government yesterday changed its advice on meat eating, prompting scorn that it had "completely reversed" its policy. The Department of Health toned down guidelines after rows over the strength of links between diet and cancer, as some critics claimed the meat industry had nobled advisers or ministers. Although Kenneth Calman, the Chief Medical Officer, yesterday advised people eating a dozen portions a week of beef, lamb, pork, sausages or beefburgers to think again, he said "average" consumers need not change their habits. That was in contrast to a statement from Health Secretary Frank Dobson, who in September advised even those eating average amounts to "consider a reduction" — at a time when a report from a working group of the Committee on Medical Aspects of Food and Nutrition Policy (Coma) was delayed because of disagreements. Shadow agriculture minister Michael Jack said: "Now the report has been published... the Government is putting up the Chief Medical Officer to explain why now average meat eaters may make no change to their consumption — a complete reversal of Frank Dobson's statement five months ago." The Vegetarian Society demanded an inquiry into what it called "a shocking turnaround". A spokesman added: "Someone has put pressure on the panel and the most likely source is those with an interest in the meat industry." Sir Kenneth also called on the public to consume at least five portions of fruit and vegetables and enough fibre to protect against cancer. Yesterday, those who ate the national average of 90 grammes of cooked red meat per day, or around eight to 10 portions a week, were given

the all clear. Only those "higher consumers" eating about 140 grammes or more a day, or 12 to 14 portions a week — "might benefit from a reduction," said Sir Kenneth.

The report was to have come out on September 25, but Mr Dobson and the Agriculture Minister Jack Cunningham postponed publication on the grounds that not all the members of Coma had discussed the safe limits.

The report found "moderate evidence to conclude that lower red meat and processed meat consumption would reduce the risk of colorectal cancer", but evidence linking other cancers to red meat was weak or non-existent.

The working group was also worried that those who cut out meat would lose most of their iron intake.

Evidence suggested diet could contribute to a third of all cancers, Sir Kenneth said.

The report warned against taking beta-carotene supplements in the hope of protecting against cancer, and said high-dose micronutrient supplements "cannot be assumed to be without adverse effects".

Gordon McVie of the Cancer Research Campaign said on the whole he agreed with the report's findings, but harder evidence on links between diet and cancer was needed.

Philip James, director of the Rowett Research Institute, Aberdeen, architect of the Government's new Food Standards Agency and a Coma member, although not on its working group, denied he had pressed ministers to give stronger advice.

Tim Lang, professor of food policy at Thames Valley University, said the advice was still "astonishing but welcome. Sir Kenneth is still saying a very significant number of people have to change. The message is we at least need to put a ceiling on meat production and probably reduce it."

The Meat and Livestock Commission welcomed the report's recommendations for "a healthy, balanced and varied diet".



Mahogany trees felled illegally in Brazil are alleged to have been bought by the MoD to refurbish wardrooms on Royal Navy warships, below MAIN PHOTOGRAPH: MARK EDWARDS/STILL PICTURES

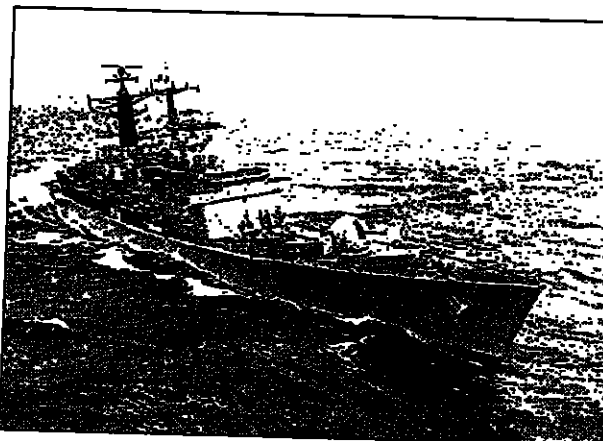
## MoD buys mahogany 'stolen' from Amazon

Timber for wardrooms 'came from Indian reserve'

John Vidal

**T**HE Ministry of Defence has been accused of breaching government policy by buying mahogany stolen from an endangered Amazonian tribe.

A nine-month investigation commissioned by the BBC has found that 7,230 cubic feet of timber bought to refurbish the wardrooms of Royal Navy warships came from the protected reserve of the Kayapo Indians in the Brazilian state



of Para, where most of the timber extracted is known by the Brazilian government to be illegally felled.

The MoD's "green procurement office" failed to monitor

the timber's origins, alleges a BBC documentary tonight.

More than 300 Brazilian groups, representing several million indigenous people in Amazonia, have written to

the Defence Secretary, George Robertson, demanding that the MoD stops buying from the Brazilian logging company involved.

The MoD only admitted they had placed the order after threats of legal action and the tabling of parliamentary questions. At first it insisted that the deal was "commercially confidential", says Friends of the Earth. Yesterday the MoD said it had not acted illegally or unethically.

"We are not to the best of our knowledge and belief buying illegal timber," said a spokesman. In a statement, the MoD said that "certificates of conformity" were provided by the logging company before the contract was signed.

"It is government policy that purchases of tropical timber are made from reputable suppliers who are required to

confirm that supplies are from sustainable sources," said the statement.

The timber trail uncovered by two journalists working with the BBC Natural History Programme starts with a Brazilian company called Madeira Juari, which has a record of illegal felling in Kayapo territory.

The reporters visited the company's sawmills, and compared documents showing the amount of timber felled to the quota that the company is allowed to fell, and found massive discrepancies. The journalists allege documents were falsified to suggest that the timber came from a managed timber reserve. It was then sold to the MoD via a British supplier.

Brazil estimates more than 80 per cent of Amazon mahog-

ony is felled illegally, but says it does not have resources to stop the trade. Britain is the second largest importer of Brazilian mahogany.

"We have to do business as business legally and ethically," said a MoD spokesman last night. "We have seen no conclusive evidence that this timber comes from anything other than sustainable sources."

Friends of the Earth yesterday called on the Government to enforce its policy. "The Amazon forests are being destroyed faster than ever, and by buying Brazilian mahogany the Government is partly to blame."

Last month the Brazilian government released previously suppressed documents showing that an area the size of Belgium was felled in 1995/96.

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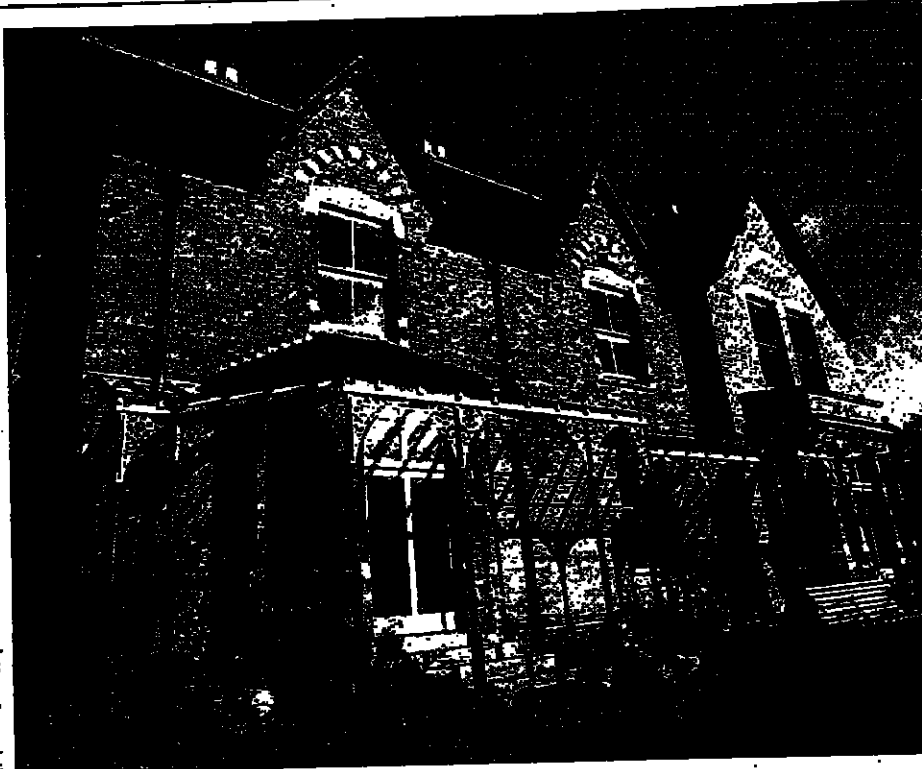
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The interior and exterior of Sunnycroft and (right) one of its converted gas mantles  
PHOTOGRAPHS: DON MCPHEE

Maev Kennedy

**N**OTHING could be more superbly ordinary than the National Trust's latest property, including its name: Sunnycroft. The red brick suburban villa in Shropshire has come with all its contents straight from the world of Just William — a little bit too grand for the Browns, not quite grand enough for



Violet Elizabeth Bott, but with a warren of outhouses and sheds for the Outlaws to take refuge in.

"There were hundreds of thousands of houses just like this on the edge of every town and city. Now, as far as we know, it's unique," said Simon Murray, the trust's regional manager.

The house still stands in six acres of gardens just five minutes' walk out of Wellington, a prosperous

market town now surprised to find itself part of Teiford.

All of Sunnycroft's peers have had luxury homes built on their gardens or have been split up into flats or converted into nursing homes.

Sunnycroft was owned by four generations of the same family since it was built at the end of the 19th century. They were local manufacturers, pillars of the bench, the golf club and

the masons. They added the odd electric fire to Sunnycroft, but kept the old cast-iron radiators and all the other solid Victorian and Edwardian fittings, since they never wore out.

The house was left to the trust last year by Joan Lander, with all its contents and £240,000. The contents included the fruit from the garden, which Miss Lander was still bottling up to the year she died, aged 80; a bucket of 40-year-old eggs



preserved in isinglass; the Dinsdale in the coach house; 5ft stacks of old copies of Country Life; Edwardian parlour games, and enough Wright's coal tar soap for a lifetime — or more than a lifetime as it turned out. Miss Lander was a noted needlewoman who worked with the Royal School of Needlework on the Queen's coronation robes. She gave courses and ran her needlework kit business from the house.

After Julian Gibbs, historical building adviser, examined the house and gardens, he concluded that it was not only worth preserving but exceptionally rare and of national importance.

After some restoration work the trust will be seeking sympathetic tenants to live in the house, feed the chickens, and mow the tennis court and open it to the public two days a week from summer 1999.

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**A. What about security?**

**Q. Airbags?**  
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**Q. Is there a choice of engines?**  
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**Q. DOES IT HAVE FLIP CENTRAL LOCKING?**  
**A. IT DOES.**

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**A. Very, very special.**

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**A. Nope.**

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**Q. Tinted glass, a possibility?**  
**A. Tinted glass, a certainty.**

**Q. FINANCE...**  
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**Q. How about a really sexy cloth trim interior?**  
**A. The engine immobiliser system comes as standard. Q. Does it have power steering? A. It does have power steering.**

**Q. Also like front fog lights, as standard? OK! A. OK.**

**Q. 1.4, 1.6, 1.9, 2.0 also like front fog lights, as standard? OK! A. OK.**

**Q. 1.4, 1.6, 1.9, 2.0 also like front fog lights, as standard? OK! A. OK.**



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## Millions of fish killed by pollutant

Annella Gentileman

**S**CIENTISTS were struggling last night to identify a pollutant which has killed over 3 million fish in one of Britain's worst river poisoning incidents.

As environmentalists assessed the long term damage caused by the contaminant, Environment Agency officials said they thought that they had located the village where the substance was released.

Agency representatives were focusing on farms and businesses around Little Bedwyn, in Wiltshire — the farthest point upstream from where dead fish have been found. They believe pollution entered the Kennet and Avon Canal near the village and spread downriver to the Berkshire trout farm, near Hungerford, killing its entire stock of over 150 tonnes of trout on Wednesday.

Tests on the dead fish and the water in the canal and adjoining River Dun have so far not identified the poison.

An Environment Agency spokeswoman said: "It is unusual that it is taking so long to identify the substance, given that we have been testing solidly since Wednesday morning and that a team of 30 biologists, eco-toxicologists and pollution experts have been called in. The pollutant is not showing up on our laboratory tests and the fish don't show any obvious signs

of damage. We still aren't sure how they are dying."

Michael Stevenson, the farm's owner, who raised the alarm when he noticed that his fish were dying by the thousand, was working with the Environment Agency to clear an estimated 30 skip loads of dead fish before they began to rot. "It is an awful sight, all these dead fish just piled up — it breaks your heart," he said.

An unknown number of roach, bream, gudgeon and perch have died in the canal and many others were showing signs of distress and discomfort, the agency said. A rat and two ducks have died in the area, but scientists said other river wildlife was apparently unaffected.

Thames Water yesterday reassured customer that supplies to homes and businesses had not been affected. Michael Warhurst, a Friends of the Earth pollution campaigner, said that it was impossible to tell how permanent the damage to the local eco-system would be until the pollutant was identified.

"It is a shocking incident," he said. "It is clearly a very powerful toxin that has very severe effects even in low concentrations."

Water poisoning incidents are frequently caused by small businesses and farms which pour chemicals — such as sheep dip — down the drain or into rivers to avoid the cost of disposing of them correctly.

## Guardian praised for 'courage and sheer excellence' at awards

Kamal Ahmed

**T**HE GUARDIAN was praised for its "courage and sheer excellence" at the British Press Awards last night, rounding off one of its most successful years. It won three awards a week after it was named Newspaper of the Year in the What the Papers Say awards.

The newspaper was awarded the team reporting award for its investigation into the affairs of Jonathan Aitken, Nick Davies won the feature writer of the year award, and Libby Brooks was awarded the Cecil Hemmingsworth King young journalist of the year award.

The Daily Mail was named Newspaper of the Year, with the Guardian picked out for special praise by the judges.

The full results are: Newspaper of the Year: Daily Mail; Reporter of the Year: W F "Bill" Davies, the Telegraph; Financial Journalist of the Year: Ben Lowman, the Observer; Scoop of the Year: James Whitaker, the Daily Mail; and the Mirror.

Sports Reporter of the Year: Harry Harris, the Mirror; Business Journalist of the Year: Neil Bennett, Sunday Telegraph; Columnist of the Year: Ruth Picardie, the Observer; Foreign Reporter of the Year: Anna Antonowicz, the Mirror; Young Journalist of the Year: Libby Brooks, the Guardian; Interviewer of the Year: Lesley White, Sunday Times; Critic of the Year: Alexander Walker, Evening Standard; Specialist Reporter of the Year: Christine Doyle, the Telegraph; Feature Writer of the Year: Nick Davies, the Guardian; Team Reporting Award: the Guardian; Aitken investigation; Sports Writer of the Year: Michael Parkinson, the Telegraph; Photographer of the Year: David Ashdown, the Independent; Cartoonist of the Year: Matt Pritchett, the Telegraph.

No Journalist of the Year was chosen. Three Guardian journalists, Luke Harding, David Leigh and David Pallister, have been shortlisted for the prestigious George Orwell Memorial Fund book prize for 'The Liar, an account of the Jonathan Aitken case. In the second journalism category, the shortlist includes Guardian writers George Monbiot and Polly Toynbee and the Observer's Nick Cohen.

**What exactly is American energy? It's the thing you're meant to find here, that bit of exhilaration, that buzz, that crack.**  
Bill Buford

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## Glint of change in 100 years of Pearly male tradition

Russell Nicol

THE accents may differ but the monarchs of London's East End have heard the calls for modernising the Windsors and realised that their own royal families may have to change.

The Pearly Kings, the sparky Cockneys known for doing the Lambeth Walk, are to try to bolster their numbers by giving their daughters equal right of succession. The move follows the Royal Family's tacit decision to support a government proposal allowing princesses equal rights to throne of Great Britain.

"We've got to keep up with the times," said George Major, the Pearly King of Peckham. "We think it's right that the Royal Family is going to change, that's one of the reasons why we are changing our constitution too."

The move, if it goes ahead, will break a century-old tradition of the Pearly crown following the male line. Despite his confidence, Mr Major will have to face tough opposition among his fellow monarchs when the Pearly Guild meet in two months' time.

"My grandfather passed the title to my father and he to me," said Albie Dole, the Pearly King of St Pancras. "I want my crown to pass to one of my sons."

The Pearly movement was founded in 1875 by Henry Croft, a rat catcher and road-sweeper, who grew up in an orphanage near King's Cross. He was a tiny man, less than 5ft tall, who dedicated himself to helping the poor.

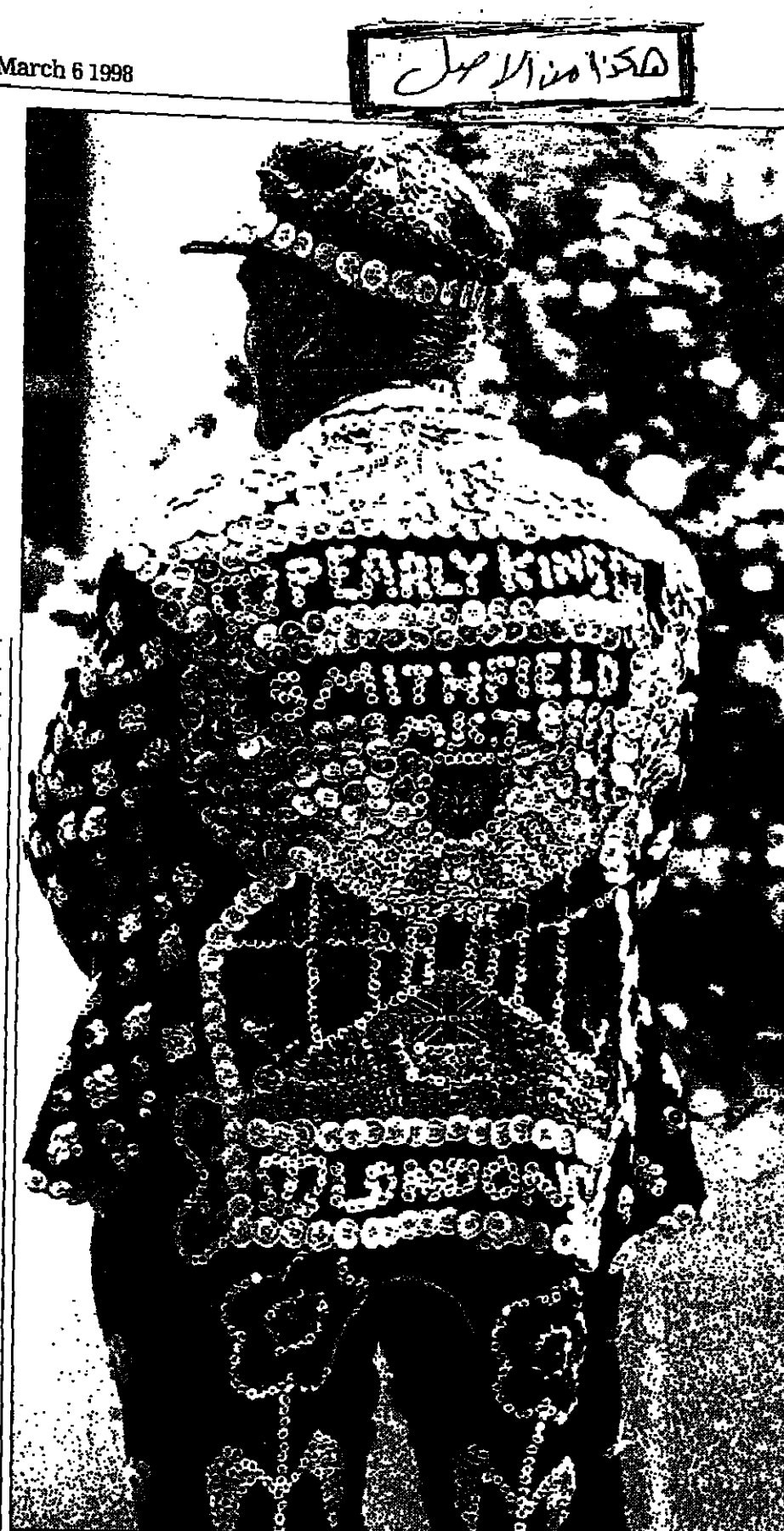
At the time the costermongers, who sold fruit in the East End, used to sew buttons to their bell bottom trousers to attract customers' attention. Croft tried unsuccessfully to

convince them to donate money to the poor. Legend says he found a sunken barge on the Thames full of mother of pearl buttons. He salvaged a portion

and sewed them on his suit, appearing as a shimmering figure. The suits quickly became fashionable among costermongers, whose clan chiefs

were crowned Pearly Kings in the boroughs of east and south London. Ever since, they have rallied their tins on the streets of London to collect for charity.

A Pearly King proudly wears his traditional shimmering costume as he waits to meet the Queen Mother on her visit to the modernised East Market at Smithfield last year



## Teachers jailed for attack on PC after drinking bout

Janet Wilson

TWO teachers were each sent to jail for two months yesterday for assaulting a policeman who reprimanded one of them for urinating in the street.

Michael Feeney, aged 32, and Mark Jones, 28, who teach at the Boswells school in Chelmsford, Essex, admitted assaulting PC Matthew Turner in Chelmsford town centre in December. They were each given a four-month sentence, with two months of it suspended.

In a statement read out in court, PC Turner described the incident as "the most frightening moment of my career to date".

Chelmsford magistrates were told that the two teachers would almost certainly lose their jobs at the school, where Feeney is head of sociology and Jones head of chemistry.

Both looked shocked as they were led from court in handcuffs to begin their sentences. The two admitted assault at a hearing in January, but sentencing was adjourned to allow magistrates to consider reports and watch a closed circuit television video of the incident which showed them struggling with the policeman.

The court heard that PC Turner, 26, a policeman for two years, was injured in the groin and the chin, and was



Mark Jones... grabbed policeman's radio



Michael Feeney... shouted in officer's face

off work for a week. He had been on patrol at about 1.30am when he found Feeney urinating. He reprimanded him, but was in turn abused by Feeney and Jones.

In the constable's statement, read out by Fiona Harding, prosecuting, he said the teachers had been out drinking with colleagues, and he told them both to go home as quickly as they could.

The men were swearing and shouting: "Haven't you got anything better to do?" and "There are not enough toilets in this town."

He continued his patrol and later came across the men in

an alley where Feeney called the officer "stupid and crazy".

In the statement PC Turner said Feeney was standing a foot away from him and shouting in his face. He told Feeney he was going to be arrested for being drunk and disorderly. At that point Jones intervened by grabbing the officer's radio and preventing him from calling for assistance.

He was then pulled to the ground by the two men and knelt in the gutter by Jones. "I watched them both bring their knees up into my thighs," he lost his radio, be-

ton, glasses and helmet in the struggle, but managed to pull the two men out of the alley and into the road, where he knew CCTV cameras would be filming.

He had then managed to pull Feeney's legs from under him and regain his radio from Jones. He drew his baton and ordered the men to the ground before calling for assistance.

A bystander helped restrain Jones before other officers arrived and the two were arrested.

Roger Brice said on behalf of Feeney that what happened was out of character: "It escalated in a moment of complete madness."

Stephen Chesney said on behalf of Jones that he had no previous convictions and that he was normally a responsible member of the community.

Magistrate David Lucas told the men they would each serve two months of their sentence in prison, and the remaining two months would be suspended. "The court has decided the offence is so serious that custody is the only way of dealing with it."

Each of the men was also ordered to pay £323 compensation to their victim and £80 costs.

The headmaster of the Boswells school, Kevin Arkell, yesterday expressed shock at the outcome of the case. "We will carry out our own investigation of all the evidence to ensure that suitable disciplinary action is taken."

## £1bn student debt 'sold off'

John Carvel  
Education Editor

THE Government yesterday offloaded £1 billion of student debt to NatWest Bank, which agreed to maintain the existing repayment terms for borrowers, including rates of interest limited to the rate of inflation.

It was the first move towards privatising a student debt portfolio worth £2.5 billion. N.M. Rothschild, advisers to the sale, said up to £2 billion more would be sold off next year.

Proposals to offload the debt were prepared by Conservative ministers and the expected receipts written into the public spending plans inherited by Labour. David Blunkett, the Education and Employment Secretary, would have had a big hole in his schools or university budget if he had not gone ahead with them.

Don Foster, the Liberal Democrat education spokesman, warned last night that the deal was a fire sale because the Treasury had to offer the bankers a generous interest rate subsidy and indemnity for bad debt in order to secure the arrangement before the end of the financial year.

The Government refused to reveal the terms, saying they were a matter of commercial confidence. Rothschild said the Treasury would receive the £1 billion face value of the debt immediately, but NatWest might be indemnified if students defaulted on less than 5 per cent of the debt.

Kim Howells, the junior education minister, said the deal would notice little difference and their repayments would continue to be collected by the Student Loans Company.

Iain Crawford, an academic specialising in student debt issues, said it was "an EP deal which the Government had no option but to accept".

## 'Smart' lorry driver is allowed to stand out from uniform crowd

Sarah Hall

IT IS a triumph for old-fashioned sartorial elegance over modern, casual dressing. A lorry driver who was told he faced the sack if he insisted on wearing a collar and tie to work has won his battle to dress smartly.

John Humphries, a 62-year-old former RAF man, refused to trade his dark blue trousers, light blue shirt and red-and-grey striped tie for his firm's new official uniform of blue-and-grey T-shirts, sweat-shirts and bodywarmers.

And, after four months' negoti-

ation with BRS Engineering, for which he has worked for 10 years, Mr Humphries has escaped being metaphorically collared by swapping his job on the road for one in the depot.

Yesterday, the father of two, from Banbury, Oxfordshire, said: "This new uniform just wasn't me. I had a 42-inch chest, perhaps the rugby shirt would have been OK."

"But it was a complete disaster for an old man of 62." He added: "I always wear a collar and tie - even at weekends. I just like to look smart and feel smart."

## News in brief

### Acid trial stopped for new inquiries

THE trial of a Devon businessman accused of arranging a nitric acid attack that mistakenly scarred a babysitter was adjourned yesterday to allow further inquiries to be made before the trial resumes today. Judge Graham Cottle told the jury at Exeter crown court that there had been a development. "I am not really able to say more than that. Further inquiries and investigations are being made."

Peter Humphrey, aged 51, from Axminster, Devon, denies one charge of aiding and abetting a person or persons unknown to cause grievous bodily harm with intent to Susan Humphrey, his estranged wife. The prosecution alleges the attacker threw acid in the face of the 21-year-old babysitter, Beverley Hammett, in July 1996. — Geoffrey Gibbs

### Politically corrected TV

THE Black and White Minstrels and Miss World are set to return to television screens this Easter in a celebration of politically incorrect programmes. It emerged. But not in their full, politically incorrect forms. The documentary One Million Years BC will put the once-popular Minstrels in context for a new generation of viewers, and Miss World will be the subject of another documentary as part of a themed Politically Incorrect Night on BBC2 on Easter Monday.

"We are not going to show the whole of a programme that you could deem politically incorrect in any way at all," a BBC Entertainment spokeswoman said in shocked tones.

### Broadmoor man killed lover

FORMER Broadmoor inmate Paul Beecham murdered his lover and buried her under their patio, an inquest heard yesterday. Beecham, aged 55, killed Rita Riddlesworth, aged 51, with a single blow to the head. Two weeks later he killed himself with a shotgun in the bedroom of their home in Bracknell, Berkshire. Beecham was sent to Broadmoor in 1968 after murdering his mother, father, grandfather and grandmother, with a semi-automatic rifle. He was released in 1985 and moved into Mrs Riddlesworth's home in Bracknell after meeting her through the League of Friends at Broadmoor.

East Berkshire coroner Robert Wilson recorded a verdict that Mrs Riddlesworth was unlawfully killed and that Beecham committed suicide.

### Riddle of Oasis tape

MANAGERS of rock band Oasis say they cannot confirm whether a tape claimed to contain early songs by Noel Gallagher is genuine. The tape, of eight previously unknown songs, has been put up for auction next month by an anonymous female vendor and is expected to fetch £5,000. But the group's management firm, Ignition, says it has had no contact with the woman and has no way of checking it. London auctioneer Christie's is selling the tape - said to be recorded in 1988 - and handwritten lyrics as lots in a pop and guitar sale on April 30. The seller said the songs were recorded especially for her by Oasis songwriter and guitarist Gallagher whom she befriended in the 1980s.

### How popes enjoyed high office

SEVERAL senior figures in the Vatican at the turn of the century were keen consumers of a wine fortified by cocaine, according to a book published yesterday. Popes Pius X and Leo XIII both enjoyed drinking a tonic of wine laced with cocaine invented in 1863 and known as Vin Mariani, according to the Encyclopaedia of Psychoactive Substances, written by Richard Rudgley and published by Little Brown. Leo XIII was so fond of the drink he gave the manufacturer, a Corsican called Angelo Mariani, a gold medal. — Madeleine Bunting



Starting out on a second chance and ready to study (from left) John Busby, Michael Pattison and Melanie Smith (PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTOPHER THOMSON)

## Pupils who failed get new chance to flourish

Martin Walmerwright

BRITAIN'S first "second chance" school was launched yesterday, to pioneer a helping hand scheme for the country's 45,000 young people who have left school with no qualifications.

Entry to the pilot college in Leeds, which was opened by David Blunkett, the Education Secretary, and Edith Cresson, the European education commissioner, will reverse the usual competitive entry formula by offering priority to its most disadvantaged applicants.

Persistent truants, previously disruptive pupils and dyslexia victims are among the first 60 young people to enrol at the £1 million Second Chance School, where the roll is due to rise to 300.

Leeds beat 10 other British local authorities to win European Commission backing and a £150,000 European social fund grant for the centre, which follows similar initiatives in Bilbao, Spain, and Marseilles in France.

Mr Blunkett said that the school was designed to have a strongly vocational element, restoring pupils' confidence and building links with local employers.

Students will be entitled to remain on benefit while studying on the basis that they are available for work, and the curriculum has been tailored to link with the Government's welfare-to-work programme for the young jobless.

"We are all having to get used to changes in society which mean that a second chance, third chance or even a fourth may become necessary as we have to learn new skills and adapt ourselves to qualify for new jobs," he said.

"Anyone who thinks that we're still in the days when you left school and thought 'that's education finished' is in for a rude shock."

Mrs Cresson, a former prime minister of France, said that second chance schools were also designed to be innovative, with freedom for local variations at pilot schemes in member countries of the European Union.

Leeds will shortly be joined by eight other second chance schools, from Cologne in Germany to Seixal in Portugal, all with a strong emphasis on information technology as well as basic literacy and numeracy skills.

"An example of fresh ideas can be seen at Marseilles' second chance college," she said, "where they have appointed one member of staff not to teach but simply to be there, to give unlimited time to pupils who simply want someone available to discuss their work, their problems or their plans."

"We will be pleased and interested to see what other ideas emerge as the schools are set up."

The Leeds college, which is open to pupils aged 18-24, will build on ideas on which trials have already been held

in the city, at the former East Leeds high school, which will now become the second-chance pupils' base.

Helped in its European Commission bid by the Government's regional office, the Labour-controlled council converted the redundant comprehensive building 18 months ago into a "family learning centre" to stimulate a return to education in the surrounding, severely disadvantaged Seacroft area.

"What has evolved here is a successful partnership between central government, local schools, training and enterprise and the council, which has seen more than 2,000 people enrol for courses," said Brian Walker, leader of Leeds city council.

"Twenty years ago, it was all much simpler - children left school and went into jobs, often as not lined up through their mums and dads."

"But today those networks have broken down and new measures like the Second Chance School are the way to replace them."

The school will be monitored by the Department for Education and Employment, which will sanction further second chance centres if Leeds and its European counterparts prove a success.

Mr Blunkett said that new schools were likely to be organised through local authorities, further education colleges and the private sector, liaising with the Welfare-to-work scheme.

## Case studies

Melanie Smith

Age 23

Left comprehensive in Leeds without qualifications: "I wasn't right good at writing and spelling." Worked packing ice lollies and in a local beanbag factory. Heard about the Second Chance School while signing on. "I wanted to better myself. They said: 'Give it a try'."

Studying: computers, English, office skills. "I didn't know what a mouse was when I came here - now I'm designing and printing the school's publicity flyers."

Jack Busby

Age 18

Effectively left school at 14 - "We moved to Leeds and there wasn't a school that'd take me. I was dyslexic and no one seemed able to cope." Worked in dead-end jobs, then heard about Second Chance.

Studying: reading and writing, art and design, AppleMac skills and maths. "What I'm learning should really help towards the job I want - being a graphic designer."

Michael Pattison

Age 23

Truanted a lot after father's death. Only qualification: GCSE history, grade D. Joined YTS scheme training greynolds but "it wasn't me". Enrolled on Second Chance four weeks ago.

Studying: computer skills and information technology, literacy and design. "In the four weeks I've been here, I must have packed in more than I learnt in all my years at school."

When I played, England were a soft touch, a team you would improve your points average against. But times change."

Terry Cobner, WRU director

Sport98 page 8







# Serbs leave trail of death in Kosovo

Jovan Kovacic in Pristina and Ian Black in London

**S**ERBIAN security forces pursuing guerrillas in Kosovo killed at least 20 Albanians and apparently inflicted heavy casualties in attacks on other Albanian nationalist villages yesterday as British-led diplomatic efforts to defuse the mounting crisis were rebuffed.

Reports from Albanian sources reaching Kosovo's capital, Pristina, said Serbian police and troops shelled villages and set houses on fire in the Drenova region, where almost 30 ethnic Albanians were killed in fighting with Serbs last weekend.

Serbian television quoted the Serbian interior ministry as saying that 20 Albanians and two Serbian policemen were killed in fighting in the village of Prekaz.

As the violence erupted, Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, met the Yugoslav president, Slobodan Milosevic, to warn of him of the European Union's concern, but he left Belgrade discouraged by the defiant response.

"I wish I could say I leave with more hope than I arrived," he said. "We are particularly concerned about the latest serious operations in Kosovo."

Mr Milosevic did not issue a statement. But the Serbian president, Milan Milutinovic, reiterated that settling the crisis was "in Serbia's jurisdiction", not the international community's.

Earlier Mr Cook said: "Progress must be made before the situation gets even more grave."

"The solution to the crisis in Kosovo is not going to be met by policing actions. We expect firm action on terrorism, but within the law — not above it."

Mr Cook is to report to fellow foreign ministers from the international Contact Group — the United States, France, Germany, Russia and Italy — before they meet in

London on Monday for crisis talks on Kosovo.

Diplomats said the group was united about there was no room for Mr Milosevic to back down and act swiftly to avoid the disagreements that accompanied the start of the Yugoslav wars of succession in 1991.

British officials said that the progress made in implementing the Dayton peace agreement in Bosnia had made Mr Milosevic less important and so more susceptible to pressure over Kosovo.

Albanian sources said yesterday's assaults with artillery and tanks were on villages around the small town of Srbica, about 15 miles west of Pristina.

Police prevented Western journalists reaching the area, a known nationalist bastion with a population of about 60,000.

A spokesman for the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), the biggest Albanian political party, said: "We have heard reports of casualties but we can say nothing for sure until we have names."

The Pristina newspaper Koba Ditore quoted an Albanian human rights spokesman as saying that there were dozens of dead and injured, and that the population had left Glogovac and the nearby villages of Likosane and Kirez.

Ten men of one family in Kirez, suspected by the Serbs of having KLA links, were among the dead at the weekend.

The first Albanian reports said the villages of Prekaz and Lausha, close to Kirez, were shelled early yesterday.

Other police attacks were reported on villages between Srbica and Mitrovica to the north.

The police reopened the road between Pristina and Srbica in the late morning, but there was no indication whether the security operation had been completed.

Jovan Kovacic is a Reuters correspondent

## Chancellor in trouble



Protesters in Helmut Kohl masks, draped in a long German flag, demonstrate in Hamburg yesterday against stubbornly high unemployment

PHOTOGRAPH: MICHAEL PROBST

# Kohl loses vital vote to SPD

Ian Traynor in Bonn

**C**HANCELLOR Helmut Kohl suffered a significant blow to his authority and ability to govern yesterday when he lost a parliamentary vote on new legislation for the first time in his 15-year rule.

The opposition Social Democrats (SPD), flushed with success from a whopping election victory in Lower Saxony at the weekend and the emergence of Gerhard Schröder as a formidable challenger for the chancellorship in September, notched up another gain by having their amended bill supported by a majority of six.

Two former Kohl allies, Hans-Dietrich Genscher and Otto von Lamsdorff, one-time foreign and economic ministers, defied the chancellor and joined the opposition.

The amended bill drafted by the SPD exempts several categories of professionals from the new police bugging pow-



Gerhard Schröder: tapping a deep vein of discontent

## Opposition seizes on high unemployment figures

**G**ERMAN unemployment continued to hover near the post-war high of 4.8 million in February. The news prompted further opposition attacks on Chancellor Helmut Kohl.

Federal labour officials said unemployment fell by only 4,000 from January's figure to 4.819 million, leaving the rate unchanged at 12.6 per cent of the workforce.

Gerhard Schröder, chosen this week to lead the

Social Democrats' challenge to Mr Kohl in September's general election, said the figures refuted government claims that unemployment was about to fall significantly. "The ability of the government to fight unemployment is close to zero," he said in Hanover. "That is why the government must be voted out of office. This is becoming clearer from day to day."

A mild winter spared Mr Kohl the nightmare of 5 million out of work.

The government's spokesman, Peter Haussmann, said unemployment was still "unacceptably high", but claimed that government reforms had created "a good environment for more jobs and growth".

Mr Schröder is trying to tap a deep vein of popular discontent on jobs.

It was this version which went through yesterday. The Kohl camp will now seek to tar the opposition with the allegation that it is soft on crime.

But in a country where legalised snooping is a more than usually sensitive issue, because of the practices of the Nazi Gestapo and Communist Stasi secret police, the opposition will be able to claim that it is tough on crime while mindful of civil liberties.

"It's a victory for freedom of the press and for democracy," said Hermann Meyn, president of the German Journalists' Federation. "The discussions of the past weeks have shown how easily MPs are ready to sacrifice essential elements of press freedom on the altar of party tactics and populism."

Mr Schröder may well emerge as the prime beneficiary of yesterday's debacle, but paradoxically he was in favour of the government bill, to demonstrate his hardline stance on law and order.

## Mir crew find missing spanner to open their own front door

James Meek in Moscow

**T**RIUMPHANT cosmonauts finally unlocked Mir's front door yesterday after rummaging for hours in the craft's cluttered nooks and crannies for a missing tool.

Earlier in the week mission control was in despair when one cosmonaut broke all three of Mir's ordinary spanners trying to turn the last bolt locking the outer hatch so he could go for a spacewalk.

It turned out that they had been using the wrong tool. The cosmonauts then

began a search of the seven-module station and found what they wanted.

The lost tool caused flight planners to delay two spacewalks planned for this week and reschedule repair spacewalks.

● Eileen Collins, America's first female space shuttle pilot, was named yesterday as the first woman to lead a US space mission.

"In December 1998, when the shuttle Columbia takes off, Colonel Eileen Collins will take one big step forward for women and one giant leap for humanity," Hillary Clinton said at a White House ceremony.

## PERSONAL LOANS

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## Turkish men may forfeit control of family affairs

The tradition of male dominance is under threat, **Chris Morris** reports from Ankara

**A** STATE commission has recommended Turkey to repeal laws which give men the dominant role in the family, after four years of deliberations.

Jealously guarded male traditions are suddenly under threat, although a change of law is not going to change attitudes overnight.

The current civil code states that "the husband is the head of the family", while the new draft says "both the wife and the husband have an equal say in family affairs".

Full implementation of that provision would be a social revolution, but resistance will be severe. "Every institution has a leader, and in the family it is the father, the man," Mehmet Togan said as he hurried down an Ankara street. "I can't imagine anything changing that, because the man has all the responsibilities."

The commission wants to remove provisions which give men the final say in where a family should live, how children should be raised, how money should be spent, and whether women should get a job.

The recommendations go to the heart of an emotional issue — the right of the father to decide whom his daughters should marry. The media has recently highlighted dramatic stories of youthful rebellion against this tradition.

In one case, a young woman survived being strangled and thrown into the Euphrates River by members of her family after she had run off with her lover.

In another, a young couple developed frostbite and a friend who helped them died in winter storms as they tried to elope across the mountains.

It's all about a strict code of honour, which male members of the family feel duty bound to enforce in often brutal ways.

Last week a woman who

"Every institution has a leader and in the family, it is the man. I cannot imagine anything changing that"

had "dishonoured" her family was crushed to death under a tractor. Her family initially told the police she had died in a road accident.

These "honour" crimes may not be as common as they once were, but violence against women in general is still endemic.

A new law recently approved by parliament makes it much easier to report and prosecute cases of domestic violence.

"We must have better protection against violence, particularly sexual abuse

of women and children," Serpil Usur of Ankara University said. "The new laws and these new proposals are by no means perfect, but they are a step in the right direction."

Some Turkish women do play increasingly influential roles in politics and business, but their number is limited. Tansu Ciller was briefly prime minister, and she still leads one of the main opposition parties.

There are only 13 female MPs, however, out of more than 600.

Women's rights activists have become a strong voice for reform, but their movement is mainly a middle-class intellectual one, and has little contact with towns and villages in the conservative Anatolian heartland.

"It's very difficult to cross the social classes in a meaningful way, and different women are struggling for different things," Yildiz Temurkhan of the Human Rights Association said.

The most dramatic example of that is the rise of political Islam, and the campaign to allow women to wear the Islamic headscarf more freely in public offices. Turkey's secular state frowns on the headscarf as a religious symbol which is used for political ends, and it imposes some restrictions on dress.

The headscarf debate poses a dilemma for women's rights activists. On the one hand, it is an issue of freedom of choice; on the other, many westernised women fear the Islamists have a broader agenda and want to enforce their own dress code.

## Meciar tightens grip on Slovakia

Kate Connolly in Vienna

**S**LOVAKIA slid closer to constitutional crisis yesterday as parliament again failed to choose a new president.

In the capital, Bratislava, neither candidate secured the required three-fifths majority in a second round of voting. This means there is still no successor to Michal Kovac, who left the presidential palace on Monday at the end of his five-year term.

The autocratic prime minister, Vladimir Meciar, has taken over most presidential powers. The populist-nationalist coalition which backs him and has 82 seats in parliament did not support any of the contenders for president in either round. This has fuelled suspicion that he has engineered the deadlock.

Mr Meciar has wasted little time exercising his new powers. His cabinet met in the vacant presidential palace early on Tuesday and, shortly afterwards, announced the cancellation of a referendum, scheduled for April 19, on Nato membership and direct election of the president.

He has recalled and dismissed 28 Slovak ambassadors, and granted amnesty to selected prisoners. Among those to be released are the suspected kidnappers of ex-president Kovac's son.

The Slovak secret service (SIS) is widely believed to have been responsible for the kidnapping of Michal Kovac junior in 1995. It also emerged this week that Mr Meciar had used presidential powers to block investigation of the kidnapping.

The transfer of powers to Mr Meciar has triggered street demonstrations. Protesters have included groups of young people singing the national anthem and waving Slovak flags with black ribbons attached to symbolise the death of democracy.

Slovak opposition politicians said their worst fears were being confirmed. "All these steps indicate that we have to be prepared for dictatorship and increasing tyranny in Slovakia," said Arpad Duka-Zolyomi, a leader of the ethnic Hungarian minority.

Opposition leaders said they planned to campaign for a new referendum.

**When it comes to implementing our manifesto we will not roll over like a spaniel in front of any vested interest.**  
**John Prescott**

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## 10 WORLD NEWS

## News in brief

## Hospital bombed by Khartoum plane

A SUDANESE government plane bombed a hospital at Yei town in territory held by rebels yesterday, killing seven people and wounding 46, the charity which runs the hospital said. The Norwegian People's Aid said five of the 13 bombs hit the hospital directly, destroying the operating theatre and an evacuation bunker in the grounds.

The hospital treats rebel soldiers, civilians and government prisoners of war. The Sudan People's Liberation Army, which wants self-determination for the south, captured Yei and much of Equatoria province a year ago. — Reuters, Nairobi.

## Aide signals Abacha's plans

A SENIOR aide of the Nigerian military ruler Sani Abacha yesterday gave the clearest official signal yet that General Abacha plans to stand in the presidential elections in August. Sule Hamman, the general's political adviser, told thousands of supporters at a state-backed rally in the capital Abuja that they would "not be disappointed" when his decision was revealed. Gen Abacha, who took power in 1993, has promised to restore democracy in October.

In Lagos, 35 democracy activists were released on bail after being arrested on Tuesday during a march against Gen Abacha's staying in power. — Reuters, Abuja.

## Fire hits Zimbabwean TUC

A FIRE gutted the offices of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions in Bulawayo yesterday, the day after a two-day national strike against the government.

Locks on the office door were broken and there were other signs that the fire was deliberate. It appeared to confirm the fears of the union's leaders and supporters that they are in danger of retaliation from President Robert Mugabe's government, which has issued numerous threats that strike organisers would face "drastic and punitive action". — Andrew Meldrum, Harare.

## UN campaigns to help women

THE United Nations launched an international campaign yesterday to eradicate female circumcision. An estimated 120 million women have been circumcised, and the operation is believed to be performed each year on more than 2 million young girls, mainly in Africa and Asian countries.

Launching the three-year campaign in London, Wafar Dirie, a 24-year-old Somali-born model, said: "Women have no power over it at all. I was strong enough to survive and I want to make a difference." She rejected claims of a religious connection, adding: "It's a man-made rule." — Reuters.

## Miami mayor out in cold

A COURT in Florida has thrown out the results of Miami's mayoral election in November, citing evidence of "a massive, well-conceived and well-orchestrated" election fraud. Judge Thomas Wilson Jr heard testimony from voters, most of them elderly, who said their signatures had been forged or pressure had been put on them to sign ballots they had not marked.

The defeated incumbent, Joe Carollo, brought the case after Xavier Suarez won. At least three people have been arrested in connection with vote fraud. — Los Angeles Times, Miami.

## Colombia bolsters troops

THE COLOMBIAN army poured more troops yesterday into a battleground in the south where Marxist rebels claim to have dealt the military its bloodiest defeat in more than 30 years of war.

General José Sandoval, second-in-command of the air force, said troops were being airlifted to Caqueta province from barracks throughout the country in support of more than 1,000 reinforcements flown in on Wednesday.

He said the fate of 120 soldiers from an elite counter-insurgency unit attacked by Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia rebels on Tuesday was unknown. Farc claims to have killed 70 soldiers and taken eight prisoner. — Reuters, Florencia.

## Yeltsin denounces Latvia

PRESIDENT Boris Yeltsin accused Latvia yesterday of "blatant" human rights violations in sending police to beat Russian-speaking pensioners at a protest in Riga on Tuesday. His spokesman said there could be "no talk" about negotiating a meeting between Mr Yeltsin and the Latvian president, Guntis Ulmanis.

Mr Ulmanis said he was "categorically against" linking the rally to the ethnic question. "I think there were people of various nationalities present," he said. — AP, Moscow.

## Inspector returns to Iraq

SCOTT RITTER, a United Nations weapons inspector accused by Baghdad of spying for the United States, and at the centre of January's crisis over arms inspections, arrived in Iraq yesterday, an Iraqi source said. — Reuters, Baghdad.

## Giant tumour removed

DOCTORS in eastern Hungary have removed a 94lb tumour from a man's stomach, the local news agency MTI reported yesterday. Surgeons at the Gyula Kenezs hospital in Debrecen carried out the operation after his weight suddenly increased by that amount last year and he complained of feeling unwell. Initial tests showed the tumour was benign. — Reuters, Budapest.

## CIA training Arafat's spies

Tim Weiner in Washington

THE CIA has been training the security forces of the Palestinian Authority in the arts of espionage, information-gathering, interrogation and other security techniques, according to United States government officials.

With Israel's knowledge, CIA counter-terrorism and covert operations officers have been instructing senior and middle-ranking Palestinian security officials in the US since mid-1996, the officials said. FBI agents who work at the CIA's Counterterrorism Centre have helped with training.

The programme has two aims, the officials said. The first is to improve the Palestinian security forces' professionalism and ability to identify and arrest suspected terrorists. The second is to increase Israeli government confidence in the Palestinians.

The CIA teaches its trainees non-violent interrogation techniques, its lessons prohibit torture. The Palestinian security services have "commonly" tortured detainees, killing many of the 14 people who have died in their custody in the past three years, according to Human Rights Watch.

The training takes place within a broader programme of co-operation between the CIA, the Palestinian security

services and Israel's internal security force, Shin Bet. The CIA station chief in Israel has been the go-between and referee under the agreement, which seeks to combat terrorism by militant Islamic

## From 1973 to 1978 Fatah's security chief gave the US tips about plots involving radical Palestinian groups

groups such as Hamas and, ultimately, to strengthen the fragile regional peace effort. George Tenet, the director of central intelligence, helped to make the agreement in 1996 when he was deputy director. The CIA's ties to the Palest-

inian services go back 25 years. In 1973 Yasser Arafat sent an emissary to a secret meeting with Vernon Walters, then deputy director of central intelligence. He wanted to discuss how to prevent "radical

the Palestine Liberation Organisation, Fatah. Saleemeh was then on Israeli intelligence's most-wanted list for masterminding the murder of 11 Israeli athletes at the 1972 Munich Olympics.

From 1973 to 1978 Saleemeh, better known as Abu Hassan, provided the US and its allies with tips about the assassination plots of radical Palestinian organisations and other Arab terrorist groups.

The CIA set up a network of contacts in the PLO and guerrilla groups in Lebanon. Its leading Middle East expert, Robert Ames, and its officers in Beirut reached an understanding with the PLO through contacts with Saleemeh, under which the US embassy in Lebanon, which

housed the Beirut CIA station, was protected from harm.

In January 1979 Saleemeh was killed by a booby-trapped car in West Beirut. Israel's foreign intelligence service, Mossad, is thought to have set the bomb. In April 1983 Ames and at least six other CIA officers were killed when Islamic militants blew up the US embassy in Beirut.

These killings damaged the agency's deepest connections with Palestinian organisations in the 1980s. The contacts and the insights they provided were difficult to replace, according to retired agency officials. The training programme with the Palestinian security services may help recreate them, other officials said. — New York Times.



A girl washes pots recovered from the debris of her home, levelled by a flash flood which hit her village near Turbat in south-west Pakistan yesterday. About 150 bodies have been recovered; 1,500 people are missing. PHOTOGRAPH: AMIR QURESHI

## Cook promotes dual policy for Middle East

Ian Black, Diplomatic Editor

BRITAIN unveiled a two-pronged European Union plan to revive the peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians last night, while simultaneously promising to do more to relieve the suffering of the Iraqi people.

Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, announced the start of "an intensive European effort" to cajole the parties into movement, persuade the United States to intervene more actively, and assuage Arab anger at the way the West has focused on Saddam Hussein's banned weapons but not put pressure on Israel.

Mr Cook told the Anglo-Arab Association that Tony Blair had written to Bill Clinton, Yasser Arafat and Benjamin Netanyahu this week "stressing the importance we attach to the peace process".

Mr Netanyahu is seeing Mr Blair on Sunday but he made it clear yesterday that he saw little role for Europeans. "Europeans know nothing about the Middle East," he said in Madrid. "Our problem with Europe is that all of you have a colonial past and think the hills of Jerusalem and Samaria are like those France occupied in Algeria and Spain occupied in the Philippines."

"Only the United States understands us, and not, as

many people believe, because there is a large Jewish community there, but because they identify with us as the new promised land, as is America itself."

Mr Cook, who leaves on a six-country Middle East tour later this month, to be followed by Mr Blair in April, said Britain and its EU partners wanted immediate steps taken.

These include "substantial, credible and urgent further (troop) redeployments", a halt to the expansion of settlements, and the opening of Gaza airport. The Palestinians are being asked to meet their security commitments under the Oslo self-rule accord.

But Arab governments, angry at what they see as the application of double standards to Iraq and Israel, are unlikely to be convinced that Britain is doing more than blindly support US policy.

There was disappointment last year when Mr Cook twice postponed Middle East tours. His only visit to the region was to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait last month at the height of the Iraq crisis.

On the Iraqi front, Mr Cook said Britain would host a conference to work out how Europe can help the UN with a swift implementation of the expanded oil-for-food programme, designed to relieve the suffering of ordinary Iraqis under UN sanctions.

## Clinton admitted exchanging gifts with Lewinsky

Martin Kettle in Washington

WHILE continuing to deny that he ever had a sexual relationship with Monica Lewinsky, President Clinton has admitted on oath that he exchanged gifts with the former White House intern and that he talked to his friend Vernon Jordan about his efforts to find her a new job, according to new accounts published in Washington.

A detailed account of Mr

Clinton's five hours of testimony on January 17 to lawyers acting for Paula Jones in her sexual harassment case was published in yesterday's Washington Post.

The White House said it was "stunned" by the leak but "confirmed its accuracy". Mr Clinton's lawyers said the leak was "repugnant, dishonourable and unethical" and called for an FBI inquiry.

The Washington Post's account says that Mr Clinton denied having a sexual relationship of any kind with Ms Lewinsky. He said

that he met her on "perhaps five occasions" and that they might have been alone together.

Mr Clinton also acknowledged exchanging gifts with Ms Lewinsky. He said she gave him a tie and at least one book, while he gave her souvenirs from his holiday at Martha's Vineyard. He did not dispute that he may have given her a hat pin, a gold brooch and a book of Walt Whitman's poems. He said Ms Lewinsky and other interns once brought him pizza in the

Oval Office during the government shutdown in 1995. Mr Clinton said he knew that his secretary, Betty Currie, and Mr Jordan started looking for work for Ms Lewinsky after his lawyers learned that she was a potential witness in the Jones case.

Mr Clinton said that this was not done at his suggestion, but that he believed it was proper. Mr Jordan, who testified for a second day before a grand jury in Washington yesterday, has said he began to look for a job for

Ms Lewinsky after a call from Mrs Currie, and that he had assumed the request originated with Mr Clinton.

According to the Washington Post, Mr Clinton "agreed to keep his composure and answered in measured terms". His answers to many questions were "imprecise" but he answered sexual allegations "in firm, unequivocal one-word answers like 'No'".

The paper's account suggests that he walked into a trap set by the office of

the independent prosecutor Kenneth Starr and Mrs Jones's lawyers. On the previous evening, Ms Lewinsky's friend Linda Tripp had given details to the Jones team of her conversations with Ms Lewinsky about Mr Clinton, including one taped with the assistance of Mr Starr's office.

As a result, Mr Clinton was surprised by having to answer extremely detailed questions from Mrs Jones's lawyers about his relationships with Ms Lewinsky and other women.

## China acts to limit fallout from regional meltdown

Andrew Higgins in Beijing

THE Chinese prime minister, Li Peng, outlined plans yesterday to slash the bloated bureaucracy, reinvigorate state industry and push other reforms that will make millions redundant in the hope of preventing the economy succumbing to the financial turmoil sweeping Asia.

The commitment to further market-orientated change came on the opening day of the National People's Congress, the largely impotent body which meets once a year to endorse policy and personnel changes decided by the Communist Party.

Mr Li said China must "learn a lesson" from the wreckage that has buried the economic hopes of China's neighbours, and "advance confidently towards the 21st century".

The speech to 2,944 delegates in the Great Hall of the People was his swan-song as prime minister, a post he has held for 10 years but must relinquish because it is con-



Li Peng: announced steps to reform crumbling economy

stitutionally limited to two terms. He will be replaced by Zhu Rongji, a politburo member and former mayor of Shanghai.

His address ranged from economic strategy affecting a fifth of the world's population to a call for more chain stores. But there was no reference to political reform.

As a spokesman, Mr Li said, he was "suffering" from the movements of migrants from Xinjiang, a restive region in China's far west

whose Uighur minority has been blamed for several bomb attacks. Airports and railway stations were on alert for sabotage.

Though widely despised for his prominent role in the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre, Mr Li will stay at the summit of Chinese politics, moving to a new post as chairman of the People's Congress.

He predicted that China's economy would continue to grow at around 8 per cent a year, despite the regional slowdown. Many economists question China's statistics and believe it too is slowly running out of steam.

The most ambitious reform to be attempted this year is a sharp reduction in the number of apparatchiks, now standing at 8 million, which could eventually be halved. Mr Li said 11 of the 40 ministry-level bodies would be scrapped.

"This reform involves greater changes for both institutions and people than similar previous reforms," he said — a reference to earlier attempts to streamline the bureaucracy, which amounted to little.

He promised the audience of mainly bureaucrats that the drive would be "handled persistently, prudently, patiently and carefully".

More at risk of immediate dismissal are millions of workers in state-owned enterprises which the Party has vowed to transform into a "modern enterprise system" within three years.

"There will be some layoffs, which will cause temporary hardships and put more pressure on employment," Mr Li said. "Laid-off workers should change their fixed notions concerning employment possibilities."

The politically dangerous task of turning loss-making state firms into profitable companies will be left to Mr Zhu. His job has been made more difficult by the South-east Asian economic crisis, which has yet to hit China hard, although it has reduced the money and markets China relies on to keep moving.

The crisis has also discredited the chaos, the Korean conglomerates China previously looked to as a model for its own industry.



Rescuers and fire-fighters clear wreckage from a Tamil Tigers' bus bomb that killed 32 people in a busy area of Colombo

## Bomb kills 32 in Colombo

Susanah Price in Colombo

AT LEAST 32 people were killed in a suicide bombing in a busy area of the Sri Lankan capital, Colombo, when a suicide bomber blew up a mini-bus in front of a police station near the city centre.

The bomb, which was packed with ball bearings, and injured more than 200 people and wrecked cars and shops.

Security sources said the bomber, a member of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, had been forced to set off the bomb prematurely because his mini-bus was being chased by police after being involved in an accident. His path was blocked outside the police station at Maradana, and the bus exploded as two officers were about to board it. They were killed, along with 29 civilians nearby.

Witnesses said at least 20 vans carrying schoolchildren were caught up in the explosion, and schoolbags stained with blood were seen scattered in the blast area. The police said they believed at least five children had died, but hospital authorities did not confirm this.

"There was a huge blast and

smoke everywhere," said Pushpa Kumara, who was driving a van behind the mini-bus. "My windshield blew out. I don't know how I escaped. I just got out and ran."

All that remained of the minibus after the blast was the twisted wreck of the chassis. The force of the explosion hurled one car into the police station compound.

The bomber's intended destination remains a mystery, but the use of ball-bearings appeared to be aimed at causing the maximum number of casualties.

Government analysts said the bomb had been designed for use against a motorcade. There are suggestions that the mini-bus could have been heading for the parliament building on the outskirts.

This is the third suicide bomb attack in as many months and is a further setback for the government of Chandrika Kumaratunga, who came to power pledged to end the violence.

In January a truck packed with explosives was detonated outside the country's second city, Kandy, and last month a suicide bomber blew herself up at a military checkpoint in Colombo.



# Analysis The rail giveaway

## How the Tories deserted Sid and ripped off the public

Major's minions were determined to sell off the rail network – at whatever cost – before Labour came to power. What can Prescott do about it? **Alex Brummer** investigates

**O**F ALL the publicly-owned enterprises transferred to the private sector by the Tories, the British Rail sell-off was both the most complex in its construction – some 25 separate train operating companies were created – and the most hurried. Now it has been confirmed by the Audit Commission that it was really The Great Railway Giveaway – for taxpayers lost up to £1.1 billion in the rushed sale of BR's three rolling stock companies.

John Major's administration tackled the exercise like a government obsessed. Caught in an ideological wilderness after Thatcher, completing the programme of privatisation which was the core of her revolution was one of the few ways in which Major could prove his right-wing/free enterprise credentials, as he struggled with the European issue.

But it was also essential for fiscal reasons. Years of Conservative tax cutting, together with the recession of 1992/93, destroyed Tory claims to be fit custodians of public finances. It required both huge tax increases of £17 billion over two years, and an acceleration of the privatisation programme to restore a measure of equilibrium. This meant selling off even the heavily subsidised public assets: British Rail and the nuclear industry.

The Tories' preferred means of selling companies always has been through a public offering on the stock market. This has enormous advantages. Ever since the "Sid" privatisation of British Gas in 1986, such issues have been extremely popular with the public. Indeed they fostered the concept of popular capitalism in Britain, giving ordinary people a stake in the stock market.

But when it came to rail privatisation this principle was abandoned, until the very end of the process when Railtrack – which owns the lines, signalling and the stations – was sold in May 1996. There were several reasons for the change of tack. Firstly, it would have been almost impossible for either the Government to have organised itself or for the City to prepare itself for the sale of the three rolling stock leasing companies at the centre of the current profiteering scandal – and the 25 separate rail franchises – in the time available. Moreover, unless a sufficient number of rolling stock and operating companies were put into the private sector before Railtrack was sold off, professional investors would not have touched it.

Secondly, the rolling stock companies and rail franchises would be difficult for private investors to analyse. There was no track record to rely on, profit forecasts were all but notional and to the uninitiated looked like high risk

investment especially as Labour – then in opposition – had cast serious doubts on its willingness to sustain a privatised rail network. This was an explosive mix which made it virtually impossible to go the flotation route.

The final factor, encouraging what turned out to be a ruinous route of "trade sales" – selling to commercial entities rather than individuals – was the need to establish a pattern of revenue flows which would allow Railtrack to be directly sold to the public, Sid-style.

The trick was to get at least 50 per cent of old BR into the private sector by April 1996, so that a best price could be obtained for Railtrack shares.

The route to privatisation was planned by two of the Tory Party's most committed economic radicals, John MacGregor and Sir Brian Mawhinney, successive transport secretaries, who were determined to start the sale whatever the cost. It was MacGregor who was largely responsible for piloting the 1983 Railways Act through Parliament. Responsibility for the big sell-off was given to Sir George Young.

Young knew that the ultimate target was to sell Railtrack in time for the proceeds to tumble into the Treasury coffers before an election in which Labour would commit itself to halt the privatisation, if it were not completed. He and the senior civil servant responsible for the rail pri-

### Sale of the century



netting huge profits for their financial backers. In August of the same year, with Railtrack now a quoted stock market company and the political pressure off, the company sold itself to Stagecoach, the aggressive bus operator, for £226 million – a 58 per cent profit in a matter of months.

**T**HE story was much the same at Eversholt. Taken out of the public sector in February 1997 by a management buyout group which included two big venture capital funds – Candover and Electra – for £518 million, and sold on to the Forward Trust Group (part of Midland Bank) for £726 million, yielding a 40 per cent profit. The biggest profit of all was taken by an industrial consortium brought together by the Japanese investment bank Nomura, and its financial wizard, Guy Hands. Normura bought in a trade sale for £690 million and sold on for £1.1 billion, netting a 58 per cent profit and turning Mr Hands into the highest paid executive in Britain, with an anticipated bonus of £40 million.

The mishandling of the rolling stock companies which, according to the Auditor General, Sir John Bourn, cost the taxpayer £1.1 billion in potential lost proceeds, is of course only the tip of the iceberg. The NAO office has so far examined the sale of the franchises of only three of the 25 operating companies all of which need careful inspection given the proposal to sell Great Western Holdings to FirstGroup. The deal would make yet another group of British Rail executives multi-millionaires at the taxpayers' expense. The sums being collected in second-

phase trade sales of franchises are beginning to dwarf the million made by the directors of the public electricity utilities. Moreover, because the value of the franchises was underestimated so also was the public sale price of Railtrack which included some of the plum property assets in Britain.

Conservative defenders of the great railway giveaway argue that those BR executives and financial backers who shelled out for rolling stock and operating companies took an enormous risk. Perhaps. But all the evidence from the NAO report demonstrates precisely the opposite: that in the great rail bazaar, leading civil servants and ministers acted against the public interest in a timetable forced by political expediency.

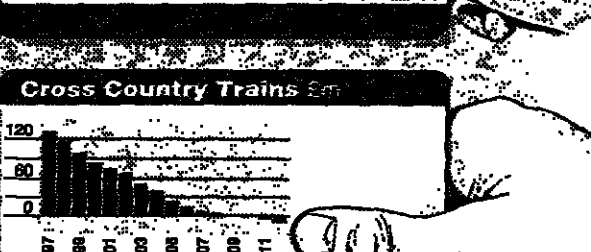
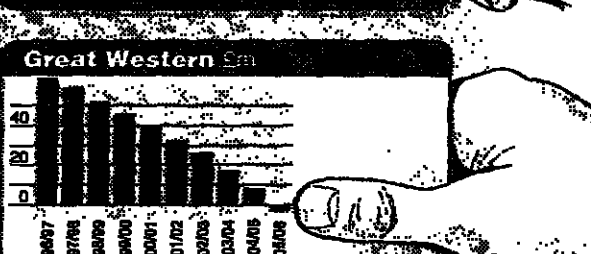
The Environment Minister, John Prescott, has moved to put an end to the profiteering on the backs of taxpayers by blocking the sale of Great Western Holding.

In much the same way as Gordon Brown has clawed £5 billion of profits back from the public utilities in his first budget, it should not be beyond the wit of the Chancellor and the Inland Revenue to design measures to return to the taxpayer the extraordinary gains made on rail assets and to invest them genuinely in a high quality network.

**Sources:** (1) Department of Transport Press Notice, January 1996; (2) Privatisation of the Rolling Stock Leasing Companies. Report by the Comptroller & Auditor General HC 575 5 March 1998, £12.65. (3) Telegraph: National Audit Office report: Privatisation of the Rolling Stock Leasing Companies, HMSO, Office of Passenger Rail Franchising annual report 1996/7. Angel, Eversholt and Porterbrook press offices. (4) Telegraph: Paddy Allen, Fintona Sheehy, Rosemary Keating and Jane Crinlan. Alex Brummer is the Guardian's financial editor and joint author of Weinstock, the Life & Times of Britain's Premier Industrialist, published by HarperCollins.

### And the public still pays

Rolling stock companies (RSCs) lost £2.27 billion to 25 operators.



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Cook promotes dual policy for Middle East

with Lewinsky

Bomb kills 32 in Colombo

A



Diary  
Matthew Norman

THINGS do not improve for Peter Stothard, beleaguered editor of the Times. Widely ridiculed for coverage of the Patten book row and savaged by his own China expert Jonathan Mirsky, yesterday he was reduced to writing a self-apology. And now it gets even worse. Coming to poor old Stodgy's rescue is Lord Harris of High Cross, one of the six independent directors of the Times. "My impression," says Lord R. "is that he is a very independent" (good to hear independence playing such a central role in Rupert's liberal empire) "and capable man. The likelihood of him kowtowing to Mr Murdoch is remote." Lord R is making quite a habit of riding to the aid of damsels in distress. He is currently raising £150,000, you will recall, to enable Neil Hamilton to sue Mohamed al-Fayed for libel. Somehow, in the light of this, you wonder if his endorsement is quite what Stodgy needs right now.

MEANWHILE, there is some relief for Mr Murdoch. "Ha ha ha ha ha," erupts Michael Winner, that champion of free speech, when my colleague Simon Bowers asks if he will be giving up his columns in the Sunday Times and News of the World. "I think in the real world, everyone knows that journalists are not allowed to write hostile pieces about their proprietor." (Might Michael narrowly have missed the point? "No, I shall not be withdrawing my services." Phew.)

THE influence of Mandy Mandelson spreads across the planet. Indeed, according to his former office boy Dolly Draper, it has now reached Outer Mongolia. Dolly reports that a certain Mr Enkh-bayar, leader of the Communist Party there, visited Whitehall last week, and proudly told all he met that his party has dispensed with the red star. The new symbol for Mongolian Communism is the red rose. "We hope one day to govern for the many, not the few," said a spokesman when we called. "But as we say in New Mongolia, there are tough choices ahead."

WHILE that one-time bearded revolutionary Peter Ritchens appears in Prospect magazine denouncing the 1960s, disturbing rumours reach us that his rightwing madman persona is nothing but a front. In 1978, an old friend from York University rang the Express news desk, and was astonished when he picked up the phone. "Pete, what are you doing there?" he said. "Don't worry," said Peter, "you have to infiltrate the establishment in order to overthrow it." So was he then — and is he now — a member of an underground communist cell? "No," he replies, a little too quickly, before agreeing that this is just the sort of blanket denial you'd expect from a subversive traitor. The details are going to MIS.

I AM delighted to hear that, despite widespread ridicule, Harold Brooks-Baker continues to dog his splendid "Burke's Peerage World Book of..." (a range of works chronicling the heinous of various surnames around the world). William Wallace sends in a mail shot. "Dear Mr WJ Wallace," it begins. Fans of Harold, the matchless — or, in this case, literally peerless — authority on titles will be unsurprised to learn that for several years, Mr Wallace has been Lord Wallace. We ask Harold how he would crush those unkind souls who might interpret such mistakes as an indication that he is a complete and utter charlatan? "Why do you say charlatan?" he replies. "I'm not trying to fool anyone." And he isn't.



## Don't complain that the free market rules our lives: you voted for it

Decca Aitkenhead



SOME time ago, I found myself watching the television consumer programme Watchdog. A collection of pet owners were gathered around Ann Robinson, clutching their dogs in collective indignation. They had paid a fixed premium for their pet insurance for years; now that their dogs had grown frail, the insurance companies had upped the price.

How could this be fair? Was it possible, after all these years, that what the companies really cared about was not the well-being of the darling pugs at all, but the squalid business of making money? The same injured disbelief toward business practice has shuddered through the publishing world this week. "One is appalled to think that someone can buy a publishing firm like a soap factory," swooned a HarperCollins novelist. "It seems that free speech and Mr Murdoch are now a total contradiction," discovered another. "Rupert Murdoch's attitude is unprofessional," Doris Lessing gasped. "It is so shocking I can't find words for it."

If you felt kindly, you'd put such bovine naivety down to novelists' other-worldly charm. A less generous soul might doubt that they'd ever honestly imagined Mr Murdoch owned a publishing house because he loved a good read. As HarperCollins writers queue to get their affront on record, you wonder whether they are motivated more by an attachment to free speech, or by the awful prospect of being embarrassed at the next dinner party. At least Simon Heffer had the decency to admit, "If I am being honest, I can claim only self-interest. I do not wish my

good name as a writer of books to be tarnished." Analysts talk of the incident being a PR catastrophe for Murdoch. The only serious PR problem is for his employees, who now feel required to look ashamed at dinner parties. But what scandalous discovery have we made about their boss? Simply that he will do whatever he needs to in order to make more money.

This is hardly news. Perhaps his writers were too busy admiring their pay packets to notice when he banned the BBC from his panging Asia cable channel. The week's only interesting revelation is that, very occasionally, someone in Murdoch's empire makes a mistake. It is easy, particularly when working for the Guardian, to sneer about bookers who take the Murdoch shilling. Stuart Proffitt's very name can raise a snigger. Sure enough, the only reason people choose to work for Rupert Murdoch is because he pays them so much money, and Murdoch knows this. It is a crude, cynical deal struck by both sides — but it is a mistake to be too sanctimonious about it. Writing for Rupert Murdoch is a legitimate choice, people need to pay the mortgage, and if they want to do it, fair enough. It's not on, however, to sup with the devil, then complain, as one novelist has, that "this business leaves a sour taste in the mouth."

But the saga is much more than a free-market exercise about HarperCollins and free speech. Those implicated in NewsCorp have indulged in extravagant, expedient outrage in order to protect their reputations. That was predictable. "If I am being honest," I can claim only self-interest. I do not wish my

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## New kitsch on the block

Bill Buford



WHAT exactly is American energy? It's the thing you're meant to find here, that bit of exhilaration, that buzz, that crack. As in, America: no history, only a few museums, not all that much culture, and the television is crap, but — isn't the energy just thrilling?

The question occurred to me when I was standing in front of an old building called the Empire on 42nd Street, near Times Square. It wasn't, I have to admit, looking particularly energetic. For the first 25 years of its life, the Empire, a squat square thing with lots of classical bits stuck on to its front — was a proper theatre, one of 72 theatres that, (when Broadway was Broadway), put on 250 different shows a year: vaudeville and melodrama and the long, long run of *Abie's Irish Rose*. Bud Abbott and Lou Costello met at the Empire. Clark Gable acted there, as did a young Lawrence Olivier. Then came the Depression, and the war, and thousands of soldiers looking for a good bad time, and most of the grand, gaudy buildings around Times Square were boarded up. Mid-night Cowboy — hustling among the peep shows and sickos — was filmed just across from the Empire — an abandoned building by then, its seats and its carpets long ago looted.

BUT it was also a protected one, and last Sunday, the Empire, with its classical bits still intact, was moved 180 feet from its original location, between 7th and 8th Avenues, to the corner. It was an expensive operation — this was the largest New York building to be moved in its entirety — and I went along to watch. To effect the move, six sets of railway tracks were laid down, and, with sophisticated hydraulics, the Empire, severed from its foundation, was lifted an eighth of an inch and slipped on to a heavy platform that workers succeeded in sliding along at a pace of about ten feet an hour. Giant cartoon versions of Abbott and Costello were out in front, doing most of the pulling. The governor came down from the state capital to toast their achievement.

Times Square, as you possibly know, is undergoing some changes, and the shifting of a 77.5 million building to the end of the block is part of the project. Shifted thus, it satisfies an architect's sense of symmetry: to the right will be the new Empire, which will actually be nothing more than an elaborate entrance to a

complex of 25 cinemas, and to the far left, matching the Empire's garish classical touches, will be a new branch of Madame Tussaud's. Well, I thought, as I joined the applauding spectators, what a lot of fuss for a bit of symmetry, but what I was really witnessing, I realised, was a celebration of kitsch on a grand scale. Nothing can be too obvious or too vulgar. Nothing can cost too much money to make money. Garish means gain.

I haven't met Bruce Ratner, the emperor behind the Empire, but I met one of his team players, fellow entertainment developer David Emil. Mr Emil runs two New York institutions: the bar at the top of the World Trade Center, the city's tallest building, and the bar at the top of the Rockefeller Center (what used to be the tallest building). Both places have vertigo, vulgarity, and a very skinny woman in a slinky dress next to a piano. They embody nothing but taste, however, when set against Mr Emil's forthcoming Times Square project. Height will not be its outstanding characteristic. That will be provided with the help of David Copperfield, the magician. The establishment will feature a display out front, an *Apprentice* parody, adding a ball of fire. The trick is this: at irregular intervals, the ball, burning just a tad too brightly, will set alight the entire display, filling Times Square with leaping flames and smoke, whereupon

Nothing can cost too much money to make money in New York

Apollo will melt to the ground in a nuclear holocaust — only to reconstruct himself within minutes. Pure unmitigatedly expensive kitsch. As is the new Empire, or the "New" Amsterdam (its Lion King is sold out, seven nights a week), or the New Victory (housing the musical version of *Ragtime*), or the "new" Brooklyn. Pastime Company or new Disney's shops. And all of them are manifestations of this extraordinary creed — you can never spend too much money to make money. Broadway has witnessed moments of great culture — its interminable Eugene O'Neill, its Tennessee Williams, its *Death of a Salesman*. Walter Winchell was around the corner. Damon Runyon was living just upstairs and Cole Porter was not far away. And everywhere was a show — raunchy and frothy and full of gags. Make 'em laugh, make 'em cry, (whatever you do) make 'em pay. What's occurring in Times Square, as old times are made new again, is unapologetic kitsch nostalgia for a kitschy time. It's full of bright lights and risk and vulgar splash and a great deal of pizzazz. It has energy — a distinctly American energy. And a great deal of fun.

Blair's sanctity defended against Roy Hattersley's criticisms

## We're no spaniels

John Prescott

ROY HATTERSLEY wrote in the Guardian yesterday that the Government was rolling over to powerful vested interests while ignoring the poor.

"Ministers continue to be wonderfully tough towards the weak. But faced with either money or muscle, it rolls over on its back and kicks its legs in the air like a spaniel," barked Roy. His charge is that the Government has made concessions to the vested interests of the countryside lobby, the CBI over trade union recognition and to Rupert Murdoch over press regulation.

I yield to nobody in my admiration for past Labour governments and the good they have done for the people of Britain. But I doubt if they did any more in their first 10 months

than we have done to deliver our commitments. There are two reasons why Roy's argument is flawed.

First it is not true that the Government has rolled over to powerful vested interests while ignoring the poor. The countryside, we have not, as the march organisers wanted, intervened to keep fox hunting. We are fulfilling our commitment to a free vote for MPs on the banning of fox hunting. We defended our record on the countryside well before the march took place; on protecting a living, working countryside: adding 30,000 hectares to the green belt; on rural housing, transport, schools and jobs. But that is stating our case, not caving in.

In relation to press freedom, the competition Bill will strengthen the powers of all regulators to clamp down on predatory pricing. And in relation to trade

union recognition, our proposals will allow trade unions to be recognised where workers want it — a stronger commitment to democracy at work than we have seen before. Roy expresses surprise that the Government is considering CBI submission, as well as ones from the unions. I strongly support the right of recognition, but I equally think it is right and proper to listen to all sides of industry on how to implement it. The results of those deliberations will be decided in the interests of the country and in line with our manifesto commitments.

The second argument against Roy's thesis about the Government might be called the dog that did not bark: the things Roy conveniently left out of his tirade. Roy, don't you remember all the attitudes ranged against Gordon Brown's £5 million windfall levy to fund the New Deal for the

unemployed? They were no poodles! And there's no mention of the business lobby against us bringing in a national minimum wage for the first time in our history. That's Labour at its best: fighting for jobs, social justice and decency. And I'm proud of that. No mention either of the reduction in class sizes being pushed through, paid for by the abolition of the assisted places scheme — a measure he strongly supports.

HE FORGOT that we took on the gun lobby to ban handguns; that we forced water companies to mend their leaks; that we took on the status quo and secured support for devolution in Scotland and Wales, and regional development agencies. All in 10 months. And we have gone further than any previous government to open up responsible

access to the countryside. I think Roy needs no reminders of the wealthy interests involved there.

Roy Hattersley is a respected elderly statesman of the Labour Party. It is a shame that he underestimates the difficulties and underplays the achievements of this Government's first 10 months in office. As a former Minister it is disappointing that he seems to expect instant solutions, long term progress. If we are serious about implementing our manifesto, we know that economic stability is essential. Roy and I know from bitter experience that governments which spend freely in the first two years can come unstuck in the years that follow. I have said that this Government will be judged, at the next election, on what we have achieved for the poor and our record on social justice. We intend to



deliver. To make Britain better. To govern the whole country, not any one section within it. Just as we said we would.

Sixteen years in opposition, after five years in government, have taught us many lessons about how best to serve our people. Roy has always been a champion of social justice. Long may he continue to voice the case for equality, not least in the House of Lords (since he is not one of the hereditary peers whose vote we intend to abolish). When it comes to implementing our manifesto we will not roll over like a spaniel in front of any vested interest. Rather we will take the more robust attitude his own dog Buster adopts towards gaggles of hissing geese.

Sorry, m'Lord.  
John Prescott is Deputy Prime Minister



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New kitsch  
on the block



## Restraining Milosevic

Kosovo needs autonomy

HOUSES SET alight and civilians shot dead by Serbian security forces yesterday make a horribly familiar picture: is this the start of the next round of ethnic warfare in former Yugoslavia? If so, it is not for lack of warning. The suggestion that the next flashpoint could come in Kosovo, where the Albanian people have suffered oppression for years, has been made repeatedly since the Dayton agreement brought peace of a sort to Bosnia. The only surprise is how long the patience of the majority population in Kosovo has endured.

The violence in and around the capital of Pristina has blunted the diplomatic thrust of Robin Cook's mission to Sarajevo, Banja Luka and Belgrade on behalf of the European Union. This was intended to strike a cautiously hopeful note, giving encouragement to the new and relatively more moderate leadership of the Bosnian Serbs. Yesterday Mr Cook did give the Republika Srpska the benefit of the doubt, telling their assembly that the extremists were being rolled back and promising international reward if they progressed towards democracy and pluralism. But moving on to Belgrade, Mr Cook was unable to deliver any bouquets to President Slobodan Milosevic. Instead his meeting was absorbed by the Kosovo question and what was called a tough message that Britain "will not stand idly by" — whatever that may mean. The US has also joined in the international pressure with a similarly coded warning from its Bosnia envoy Robert Gelbard that Washington will

use "every appropriate tool" to deal with Serbia if Kosovo ignites.

Will such warnings have much or indeed any effect? The root problem so far has been the assumption that what happens in Bosnia can be separated from what happens in Serbia — of which Kosovo is an unhappy part. Mr Milosevic has been appeased in the belief that he helped in some measure to improve matters in Bosnia. Only last week Mr Gelbard met the Serb leader in Belgrade with a basket of small but significant concessions — including reopening of charter flights to the US and of a Yugoslav Federation consulate there. These have been contemptuously accepted while Mr Milosevic powers up his repressive engine in Kosovo. Perhaps he did deliver something on Bosnia. But he did so after too many months and years during which the international community gave him the benefit of the doubt.

Similar procrastination over Kosovo will be just as damaging and probably more so. The non-provocation policy of the alternative "president" Ibrahim Rugova is now crumbling as militant action by the Kosovo Liberation Front invites more Serbian repression. A Kosovo conflagration will very soon destabilise Macedonia where relations between the government and its Albanian minority are already very edgy. Bulgaria and Greece both have potential stakes in the outcome. It will also place the Albanian government, however reluctant to become involved — and facing its own problems of unrest — under huge internal pressure.

The six-nation Contact Group which will meet in London on Monday to discuss Kosovo must send an unambiguous message to Mr Milosevic and take clear and decisive steps. It should press for the indefinite renewal of mandate for the UN forces

on the Macedonian border with Serbia. Any improvement of relations with Mr Milosevic must be tied unambiguously to progress in negotiations with the majority people of Kosovo, for which the Contact Group should offer its good offices. A real measure of autonomy remains the only solution, but as more Albanians take to arms in anger and despair, it will not be available for much longer.

## The facts of life

Oldies are in the ascendant

DO WE need another debate on the Third Age? Wasn't that what the Carnegie Inquiry with its succession of reports on the prospects facing 50 to 75-year-olds examined in depth in the first three years of this decade. It did but the debate never spread beyond the specialists. The organisers of the millennium Debate of the Age launched yesterday have a different target. They too have set up five working parties of experts on health, work, finance, housing and values but the campaign has a more ambitious goal: organising the biggest independent debate in Britain outside an election. They hope to reach 30 million people across all generations. They have devised a wide variety of events with the aim of persuading each generation to think about the future. A 17-year-old school leaver at the start of the new millennium can still expect to be alive in 2070.

The huge demographic shift, which is already underway, has been well documented. We are moving towards the oldest society that has ever existed. Fewer births and longer lives mean the number of people aged 65 and over will increase at 10 times the overall rate of population growth in the

next 40 years. By 2020, more than 40 per cent of the British population will be over 50. Europe will be even older — one out of every two being over 50 by then. Where in 1961 there were four people of working age to support every pensioner, by 2040 there will only be two. Yet we have already accommodated huge changes. When the welfare state was launched 50 years ago, people could only expect three years of retirement. Today, with earlier retirement, many can look forward to 30 years.

Unlike earlier seismic shifts in population — in the wake of plagues, famines and war — the new shift can be anticipated. Age Concern was right to put together the coalition of voluntary groups, professional associations and businesses which launched the debate. On some issues they will be too disparate to reach anything but an anodyne consensus. But they know that. The aim is to provide the public with facts and promote a genuine democratic debate.

## Cathedral visits

Mr Blair's conscience is the key

THE confessional jokes came first. What has Tony Blair got on his mind that he might want to tell all to a Catholic priest? Is the Prime Minister considering a conversion to Rome? If so, what sins might he want to reveal to the man in the secret box? Could he cope with the prospect of eternal damnation — and what about all that guilt and punishment?

No matter that Downing Street's official spokesman has denied all such talk, the recent sightings of Mr Blair alone in Westminster Cathedral, coupled with the Catholicism of his wife and children, has led to speculation that the PM is poised to follow

his family into the Roman fold. If he did, he would not only become the first Catholic premier of the modern era, he would also put a symbolic end to five centuries of post-Reformation tension between English Protestantism and the followers of Rome.

That's why the spiritual leanings of the Prime Minister contain at least the "minor element of legitimate public inquiry" admitted by the official spokesman. In a country with a history of anti-Catholic discrimination like Britain's — typified by the Test and Corporation Act, which barred Papists and Dissenters from public office until its repeal in 1830 — it would indeed be a breakthrough to have a non-Protestant in Number 10. Britain should be ready for a Catholic prime minister — or a Jewish, Hindu or Muslim one, for that matter. Those who argue that the Church of England's established status requires a Protestant head of government — qualified to nominate a new Archbishop of Canterbury, for example — are on shaky ground. A Catholic or Jewish PM would simply take advice on such appointments, as prime ministers traditionally have. Moreover, if the Church of England's status is deemed to be a barrier to diversity at the top of our government then it is that status which should change — not Mr Blair. The Labour leader's religious search is yet another reminder of the persuasive case for disestablishment.

Others have worried that Protestants in Northern Ireland would be rattled by a Downing Street shift to Catholicism. Some speculate that this is the real reason why Mr Blair has ruled out any switch: the peace process is just too delicate. If that is the case, it is a pity. A person's quest for spiritual meaning should be swayed by his conscience alone — even when he is the Prime Minister.

## Letters to the Editor

Don't shoot our northern 'duck'

I AM in full agreement with the language experts who view terms of endearment as part of our cultural heritage (Terms of endearment put people off, opinion survey finds, March 4). Whilst calling a woman "love" is undoubtedly both patronising and sexist, "duck" is the northern equivalent of mate — in that it can be and is applied equally to women and men.

We have a northern lad working in our office and he has taught us many of the traditions and values of a Lancashire upbringing, and introduced us to the many cultural diversities one may encounter there. I refer of course to scrumps, battered Mars bars and Dojello, to name but three. He feels much more at home when he strolls into the office and is greeted by many heartfelt cries of "Morning Duck!"

People are moulded by their environment and it is wrong to try and impose some politically correct limitations on how we communicate. The beauty of language is its diversity. Are we supposed to have a uniform dialect? Of course not. By all means let us campaign to eradicate sexism and racism from conversation, but leave our "duck" alone.

Adam Bouskill, London.

IS THERE any truth in the scurrilous rumour circulating that Tony Blair is seriously considering converting to socialism?

James Hamill, Leicester.

IF Nick Howell decides to accept Her Majesty's gracious invitation, he should be wary. At a June garden party our fiery was cooked and two ladies were struck by lightning.

John Dearnley, Tetbury, Glos.

## Irvine charge sheet grows

LORD Irvine says misgivings about the expenditure of £550,000 to redecorate his official quarters are "a storm in a teacup". To a QC earning about £500,000 a year from such noble causes as defending London Docklands Development Corporation, that may be so.

But it is truly preposterous that such expenditure should be defended at a time when this Government proposes to withdraw legal aid from accident victims (Irvine climbs down on legal aid, March 5) and to raise the small claims limit in the County Court to £5,000, thereby depriving claimants of the right to recover their lawyers' costs.

Research indicates that increasing the small claims limit has not improved access to justice. This is well illustrated by a respected district judge, Nic Madge, who notes that, since the small claims limit was increased from £1,000 to £3,000 in January 1996, he has only been aware of one claim by tenants for breach of repairing obligations which falls within the current small claims limit of £3,000. "The only conclusion is that, in view of the general lack of availability of legal aid, tenants with claims for disrepair valued at less than

£3,000 have not issued proceedings" (Nic Madge, New Law Journal, February 20). Denying legal representation to poor people under the guise of increasing access to justice is a thoroughly retrograde and dishonest plan. Myles Hickey, Down & Co, London.

ASTORM in a teacup perhaps, but no doubt it's Royal Doulton ... Catherine Esbester, Croydon.

THE Palace of Westminster was designed by Pugin, one of our most distinguished architects. Spending money on restoring it for the enjoyment of future generations should be a pleasure. In lauding the achievements of the past we can celebrate the future in good heart, even if it is in the shape of a billion pound plastic bubble, due to last 18 months, as opposed to Pugin's building that has lasted 158 years and counting. Victoria Farrow, Margate, Kent

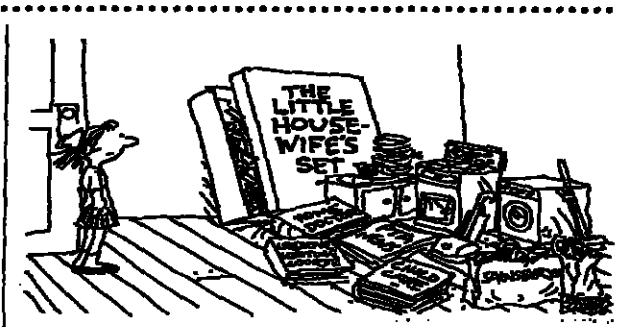
YOUR leader (Derry's Den) William Morris would approve. March 5 is way off the mark. Morris in News From Nowhere wanted to turn the

Houses of Parliament into a dung market. He understood better than us what goes on there. Prof John Whitelegg, Liverpool John Moores University.

THE problem with Mr Blair's "modern agenda" for Britain's post-democracy town halls is that the cost of new wallpaper will be extremely high. David Helliwell, Halifax.

KEEP the same wallpaper for 60 years? Is this a case of arrogant entrenchment or just one more case of out-of-touch judiciary? Rik Kitter, Hinchin, Herts.

THE noble Lord Irvine of Lairg and his Cabinet colleagues should be commended for their desire to promote a renaissance in interior design and to leave a legacy to be enjoyed by future generations. Appropriately embossed wallpaper, commemorating the early months of New Labour, is clearly a must. The design? For some reason, pigs and troughs spring to mind. John Sculman, Enfield, Middlesex.



## When the children are at school

POLLY Toynbee asks what housewives do when the children are at school (Women to blame again, March 4). I have four children, including a teenager with autism and a 10-year-old who wets the bed. My husband works away from home during the week. I have no car and cannot afford a cleaner.

During the week I consider myself busy enough with shopping, laundry, cleaning and cooking, not to mention attending school meetings, dealing with educational officials and so on.

Until three months ago I

had three part-time voluntary jobs, which I gave up in order to attend a government-sponsored training course on IT. Fortunately my neighbour had the day off work yesterday and agreed to mind my youngest son so I could go.

But school hours account for only some of the time. In the evenings I work very hard indeed. At weekends and during school holidays I act as minder for several school-age children of working mothers, unasked, unpaid and generally unacknowledged. Sarah Green, Exeter.

## Oscar loved cars, says mum

GERMAINE Greer writes that she has "yet to meet a gay man who is into cars" (Playmate of the week, March 4). May I refer her to my son Oscar Moore's Looking Aids in the Face (Picador) originally published in the Guardian's Weekend magazine as FWA (Person With Aids) columns? He describes "the motorway three-lane diagonal rictus" or how to get the wind up the wind-up who sits in the fast lane like a slug on lettuce". I dare say Germaine, as a bag of many years' standing, has FWA on her bookshelves, or she ought to have anyway.

Oscar would have written this letter had he still been alive. He loved cars and loved driving, as he describes on p78 when he was to relinquish his car because of failing eyesight. Driving a car and coming to seem inextricably intertwined with my independence as a citizen, my status as an adult and my potency as a man.

Do not fall into the trap of seeing all gay men as women in disguise. Germaine, just as there are plenty of heterosexual women (myself included) who adore driving fast cars, so there are gay men (including some of Oscar's friends) who do likewise. Elisabeth Moore, London.

Please include a full postal address. We may edit letters: shorter ones are more likely to appear. The Country Diary can be found on Page 20

## Safety net stops more than porn

INTERNET Watch Foundation have been widely commended for their war against digital porn. In particular child porn (Report, March 4). By giving users the choice to screen out distasteful or offensive material, so the argument goes, there will be less need for governments to regulate the Internet. For this to work, service providers, owners of search engines, colleges and workplaces would need to screen material before users

get the opportunity to decide for themselves. The IWF also claims that the proposed system is primarily aimed at parents. As parents, we have a duty to protect children from the nastier aspects of life but we also have a duty not to kick our kids in the sand. How can we make informed judgement about material we may never even know exists? Jason Burton, Kingston Upon Thames, Surrey.

## Rate for the job

WOULD not one of the best ways of improving the quality of local councils be the payment of a salary to elected councillors (Blair gives ultimatum to councils, March 4)? Councillors who take their positions seriously either exhaust themselves, or, having retired, they have time but perhaps not the lively minds essential if councils are to be modified. Monica Wilson, London.

## Suffering for my art

### Bel Littlejohn

BY nature, I'm a nurturer, particularly of lesser writers. Their prose may not be as sinuous (lovely word) as my own, their hearts not so open, but they deserve a pat on the back for their very special efforts in coming to terms with their limitations, bless 'em. I've lost count of the times a fledgling writer has

sent me a manuscript to read, along with a letter declaring a passionate love of my work and an overriding desire to follow in my footsteps.

But of all the ingredients that finer critics than myself have sensed in my work — they always praise my ear, and often my nose and my eye too — there is one thing that has marked me out as a writer if not of genius, then (fill in later). "What's your advice to the next Bel Littlejohn?" I was asked for a forthcoming G2 questionnaire. And my simple, one word reply? "Suffer."

I covered my early suffering in the searingly autobiographical, remorselessly honest, Daddy, I Knew You Too Well, my seminal account of a childhood spent with a father who never managed to release himself from the uncontrollable urge to return home the moment he left work, and who would neuroti-

cally spend his entire week-ends with us in our house, always desperate to please, even though he never really fitted in to our play-structures. The opening line of that book, "Damn you, Daddy, for never forgetting our birthdays," is now at the heart of all the major books of literary quotation, not to mention countless theses at home and abroad.

My lovely publishers begged me for a follow-up, and their desperation paid off. My second work of autobiography, Mummy, I Was Irritated By Your High-Pitched Laugh . . . , subtitled . . . And That Common Way You Blew on Your Soap, was an intensely lyrical, occasionally painful, almost frighteningly truthful "journey into the mother-daughter relationship". In what came to be regarded as perhaps its most hauntingly memorable scene,

I portrayed my one-eyed mother in grinding poverty, toothless and vengeful, her five-stone body shaking its last as she cursed me from her deathbed.

For some, the launch party was marred by the arrival of a large well-to-do woman with a high-pitched laugh bearing a large bouquet of flowers and calling herself Mummy. It may or may not have been my mother, I forget, but only the most pedantic could argue that her literal survival detracts from the poetic truth — both searing and soaring — of the deathbed scene.

I'm not saying I blame them, but by this time other writers had allowed their way on to my own intensely personal territory. After Nick Hornby's Fever Pitch, a book very obviously written by a man, I lent a fresh anger to the confessional genre with High Pitch, my hauntingly candid account of attending

weekly choir-practice just 80 miles from inner-city Glasgow, the daughter of undivorced parents.

And having written so poignantly of my father and mother and of my older siblings (Please Don't Pull My Head Off: Memoirs of a Tortured Sister, 1989), I am now contracted for a further two books, both describing painful journeys to hell and back. The first details, with tremendous dignity, my trials at the hands of my ex-husband (and, Don, if you're reading this, can I have my first edition of The Golden Notebook back and don't try and make out you don't know what I'm talking about because it's MINE and I can PROVE it because it's got MY name written in red felt-tip on the inside front cover, right?) and is due out this autumn.

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Fred Friendly

# A man who believed in the TV news

**M**AKING a current affairs television programme in New York in 1955 was not a smooth operation. The tension of mixing film and voice inputs by telephone wire all over Manhattan added to the relief as production staff crowded round Edward R. Murrow as "bathed in sweat and smoke", "finished reading his tailpiece to camera."

But the technical problems were only part of the reason for their sense of triumph. In the show he had just anchored, *The Case Against Me*, Radulovich, AOS9339, part of his *See It Now* series, Murrow and his producer Fred Friendly, who has died aged 83, had struck the first blow in the campaign against Senator Joseph McCarthy.

Radulovich was a United States Air Force reserve officer who had been asked to resign because, in the Cold War climate whipped up by McCarthy and others, his sister and father had been reading "subversive" newspapers. Brandishing fake lists of communists in America for three years.

People were wondering

whether anyone would dare take him on. In the end he was brought down as much by his own bullying performance in the televised hearings of his dispute with the US Army as by anything else. But Friendly and Murrow were the first to stand, fight and demonstrate the power of television to right wrong, and place TV where it has remained ever since, right at the centre of the political process.

Murrow, who made his reputation with his radio reports from London during the Blitz, was a superb reporter, shrewd, courageous and fair. But Friendly was the perfect producer for him — a big, gravel-voiced New Yorker, both warm and aggressive, with a passionate belief in the civic and social power of news. Friendly had a double career, first as Murrow's companion in arms, and then — after their collaboration was brought short "due to circumstances beyond our control", to quote the title of Friendly's memoir of his battles with CBS — as a tireless campaigner for press freedom and press responsibility from his base at the Columbia University School of Journalism in New York.

Born in New York City, Friendly's name was originally Ferdinand Friendly Wachenheimer, but he took his mother's surname, Friendly, and became Fred Friendly when he went into radio. He changed his name legally in 1938.

He started work at a radio station in Providence, Rhode Island, where he went to college, and made a series of biographical programmes about inventors like Marconi and Edison. He joined the US Army in 1941, and was sent to South-East Asia, or the "CBI theatre", as Americans called it, for "China-Burma-India", where he worked for an army newspaper, the *CBI Roundup*.

After the war, he worked for a while for NBC radio, then moved to CBS, where he teamed up with Murrow, first on an oral history project, *I Can Hear It Now*, then on *Hear It Now*, a radio current affairs show. In 1951, he and Murrow took their formula to the newly-arrived medium, television. Their first show was the first-ever hour-long television east and west coast, with a split screen showing the Brooklyn and Golden Gate bridges.

After the Radulovich show, it was inevitable that



In February 1966 while NBC covered Senator Fulbright's hearings on the Vietnam war, CBS was ordered to show a fifth re-run of *I Love Lucy*

Friendly and Murrow would eventually follow through with a frontal attack on Senator McCarthy, which they did on March 9, 1954. It is an indication of the fear McCarthy inspired, and also of the pressures Friendly and Murrow had resisted inside CBS to lay off the dangerous subject, that when Friendly tried to start his stopwatch in the control room at the beginning of the show, his hand was shaking so much that he missed the button altogether.

Friendly was summoned by CBS president Frank Stanton, who was upset by a poll suggesting that one-third of the

viewers had thought Murrow was pro-communist. In 1955, the sponsor, the Aluminum Company of America, stopped sponsoring. See *It Now*, preferring something less contentious. The programme ended up doing courageous reporting, for example of a southern racist demagogue, but in the Sunday afternoon "ghetto" to which politically controversial programming was banished.

In 1960, when John F. Kennedy was elected president, Murrow went to be the director of the US Information Agency, but just before he left he and Friendly produced one

of their classic reports, *Hart of Shame*, an exposé of conditions for migrant workers so harrowing that many American viewers, brought up on the glamourisation of life in prime-time TV, simply refused to believe it was true.

William Paley, the chairman of CBS, and Frank Stanton had an ambivalent attitude to Friendly. They knew his progress enhanced the company's reputation, but they hated the trouble he caused and the money they cost, both in production costs and in lost advertising. In 1964, on the strength of the programme, *CBS Reports*, which had taken over from *See It Now*, Friendly became president of CBS News.

Almost at the same time, however, James Aubrey, president of CBS-TV, was encouraged to chip away at Friendly's position, constantly emphasising the cost of news and current affairs.

Aubrey complained to Friendly of the unfairness of this division of labour. "They say to me," he said, "Take your soiled little hands, get the ratings, and make as much money as you can." They say to you, "Take your lily-white hands, go the high road, and bring us prestige."

Before long, Friendly was waist-deep in conflicts over the Vietnam war. He backed up Morley Safer, the Canadian correspondent who showed a marine burning straw huts with his Zippo lighter. But Frank Stanton was close to President Johnson, and Friendly was under increasing pressure. It came to a head over a programme reporting the disillusion of Senator J. William Fulbright, chairman of the Senate foreign relations committee, over the Tonkin Gulf resolution, which was based on faked reports of North Vietnamese activity, and used to justify American involvement in the war.

In February 1968, while NBC covered Fulbright's hearings on the war, CBS was ordered to show a fifth re-run of *I Love Lucy* and an eighth re-run of an even more vacuous comedy, *The Real McCoys*. Friendly resigned. He was offered another well-paid job, but turned it down.

For the next 13 years, Friendly was the Edward R. Murrow professor of journalism at the Columbia University School of Journalism. He was also the Ford Foundation's influential adviser on communications. He created

the highly successful television Columbia seminars on media and society, using what he called the Socratic dialogue method. "We seek to make the agony of decision-making so intense," Friendly characteristically said, "that one can only escape by thinking."

He was married twice. His first wife divorced him in 1968, and he is survived by his second wife, the former Ruth Mark, and three children from his first marriage.

There was his former colleague Dan Rather, "a fierce and mighty warrior for the best ethics and principles in journalism. He never gave up, he never gave in." And near the end of his life, he was still fighting for what he saw as the forces of commercialism that were destroying his beloved journalism. Television news, he said, was in danger of being "swamped into an election carnival, in which obscure the line between entertainment and news."

Godfrey Hodgson

Fred W Friendly (Ferdinand Wachenheimer), television executive, born October 30, 1916; died March 3, 1998

Umberto Mastroianni

## Sculptor of remembrance

**T**HE sculptor Umberto Mastroianni, who has died aged 87, was renowned for a remarkable series of war memorials across Italy, but he also practised his metaphorical, highly abstracted style in much smaller-scale sculptures, as well as paintings, prints and even jewellery. He had been permanently affected by his experience of the second world war, in which he fought as a partisan.

Mastroianni spent much of his career in northern Italy, but he was born in Fontana Liri, southeast Rome. His nephew was the actor Marcello, while his sculptor uncle Domenico trained the teenage Umberto in his Rome studio.

Mastroianni's earliest independent work, made after he moved to Turin in 1926, gave little indication of his future innovation. Wax busts, reminiscent of Medardo Rosso's sculpture at the turn of the century, vie with terracotta nudes, reclining like ancient river gods, and idealised bronzes with contrapposto poses. This classicism was entirely consistent with the cultural climate of Fascist Italy.

Even during the 1930s, Mastroianni's sculptures simplify the human form: a 1937 female bust reduces the outlines of the woman's head and exaggerated long neck to a pattern of graceful curves. Then in the early 1940s, Mastroianni began to create his compositions out of



Abstract dynamism... the sculptor Umberto Mastroianni (left) and work displayed in his studio

entirely abstract curved and jagged shapes — dynamic, asymmetrical and with no central focus.

Mastroianni did not mistake artistic for political radicalism. His first sight of war was as a conscript, but he later joined the Italian resistance and returned to peace-time work. His artistic work was determined to express his experience in his art, rather than engage in abstract formal experiments. This gave his war memorials an unusual power. In 1945, for example, he executed *Monument to the Partisan* in Turin for which he created a contorted, expiring figure, which, for all its distortions, remains relatively faithful to the forms of human anatomy.



PHOTOGRAPH: MAURIZIO BRAMBATTI/VEPA

Even in sculptures influenced by cubism and futurism, Mastroianni included curved, organic shapes, which allowed the conservative French critic Waldemar George to praise him in 1966 for his "anthropomorphism" and "humanism" and to claim that Mastroianni was a defender of "the Mediterranean spirit" and "the antique world". This rhetoric may have had plausibility in relation to the *Maternity* of 1956, with its traditional subject and lucid, classical structure, but most of Mastroianni's work from this period exemplifies the expressive abstraction of contemporary art.

At times, Mastroianni experimented with the rough

texture of sack material, and his slashed reliefs, made from painted metal or card, invite comparison with Lucio Fontana's canvases.

Mastroianni explored different media, including engravings and tapestries, while often deliberately blurring the distinction between painting and sculpture. Even works in precious metals were frequently covered with various pigments: the title of the painted silver relief *Sedimentation* (1965) alludes not only to its fossil-like imagery, but also to its multi-layered physical structure and metaphorical complexity. More recently, coloured glass plaques, such as *Yugen* (1990), brilliantly exploited qualities

of both transparency and opacity.

But it is for his more conventional free-standing statues that Mastroianni will remain celebrated. His war monuments are characterised by energetic, centrifugal compositions, in which the voids between the blocks of bronze or steel are as visually important as the pieces of metal themselves. Sometimes the sculptures are jagged and roughly textured, although the *Monument to the Fallen of all the Wars of the City of Prosinone* (1970-76) resembles nothing so much as a piece of useless artillery, made up of long steel pipes, arranged around smaller wheel-like forms. Mastroianni also com-

memorated the destruction of Hiroshima, and was recruited in Japan with a room of his work at Tokyo's Museum of Modern Art.

His autobiography *Raging Wind* was published in 1972. In 1987 he presented 26 works to the Galleria Nazionale in Turin. Mastroianni remained attached to that area where he was brought up. He finally settled and died in Marino, near Rome. He is survived by his wife Ida.

Christopher Masters

Umberto Mastroianni, sculptor, born September 21, 1910; died February 25, 1998

James McDonough

**D**IGNIFIED, quiet, courteous, unassuming and good-humoured, James McDonough, who has died aged 85, was the very model of a British Council officer of the 1950s and 1960s. He was closely involved in the post-war task of restoring cultural relations between the British and the Germans. His interest in people, their backgrounds and history contributed to getting young Austrians and Germans to think positively about Britain.

James was born to an old Roman Catholic family, attended the Royal Grammar School, Worcester, and read history at St Edmund Hall, Oxford. He met his future wife, Mary-Eithne, while teaching at Ampleforth College. Wartime service in the Duke of Wellington's Tank Regiment took him to North Africa and India and he rose to the rank of major.

In 1946 he was recruited by the British Council as a lecturer at the universities of Graz and Innsbruck, teaching what would now be called British Studies. It was the start of his career in German-speaking countries. He stayed on in Austria until 1964, working as education officer in Vienna.

After four years with the British Council in Malta where he set up a centre in Gozo, in 1968 he was posted to the British Embassy in Bonn. There he was involved in transferring cultural work to the new British Council office. He was characterised by what one observer described as a "sweetness of temperament". This contributed to the work of depoliticising relationships between British and Germans. He remained in Germany until 1973 — apart from four years at British Council Headquarters.

He stayed with the council after formal retirement and was decorated with an OBE in 1965 and a CBE in 1970.

In retirement he worked for a time for the Centre for British Teachers, helping to expand its work in Morocco and Malaysia. His last years were spent in Somerset, sustained by a strong Roman Catholic faith and an interest in his growing family of five children and 12 grandchildren.

Peter Clark

James McDonough, British Council officer, born July 26, 1912; died February 17, 1998

### Birthdays

Dr Madge Adam, astronomer, 86; Kiki Dee, singer, 51; Prof Sir Charles Frank, physicist, 87; Richard Giordano, chairman, British Gas, 64; David Gilmour, rock guitarist and singer, 51; Prof David Hendry, economist, 54; Prof Sir Raymond (Bill) Hoffenberg, endocrinologist, medical campaigner, 75; Malcolm Moss, Conservative MP, 55; John Noakes, actor

and broadcaster, 64; Valentina Tereshkova, astronaut, first woman in space, 61; Richard Noble, land speed record-breaker, 52; Peter Roebuck, cricketer, 42; Prof Marilyn Strathern, anthropologist, 57; Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, operatic soprano, 55; D H (David Haddon) Whitaker, publisher of the *Whitaker*, 75; Anna Winterton, Conservative MP, 57.

Michael Myers

## Making miracles in the movies

**F**OR those who are familiar with the films of John Carpenter, from *Halloween* onwards, the serial killer who figures in them goes by the name of Michael Myers. For anyone who knew the original real-life Michael Myers, who has died aged 89, this was clearly an affectionate but highly ironic gesture of appreciation from Carpenter to the man whose success in Britain with *Assault on Precinct 13* directly led to the making of *Halloween* and the subsequent movies.

For the real Michael Myers was a man whose integrity in business — for him his handshake was his bond — was matched by the openness, friendliness and support which he extended to everyone. As many of the hundreds of letters received by Pamela, his widow, say: "He gave me time when I was nobody."

Michael was born, an only child, in Hove and went on to attend Brighton College. He was a good athlete, breaking his club's quarter-mile record, as well as being a good cricketer. His grandfather and father ran a chain of cinemas and he was to become the third generation of Myers to be engaged in the film business — to be followed by his son Martin — albeit in distribution rather than exhibition.

He began his career with RKO Films as a logging clerk in the mid-1940s and 1949 joined International Pic-

tures. In 1961 he became sales manager for the newly established Miracle Films, which he eventually took over after the retirement of the last partner. During the 1950s, Miracle was setting the pace, alongside Academy, in the distribution of foreign-language films but, when they came to Britain, they were in its role, Miracle saw it as fun. They launched Brigitte Bardot in *La Femme d'un Face* (Light Across the Street) in which she showed a little bit of one breast. It was released just before her leap to stardom in *Et Dieu Créa La Femme* (God Created Woman). In the late 1960s they gained further notoriety with *Quiet Days in Clichy*, from the Henry Miller novel, and the Swedish *I am Curious... Yellow*, the first film to be shown in Britain with full-frontal female pubic hair — all launched with the Miracle byline. "If it's a good film it's a Miracle."



The man with the golden handshake... Michael Myers

the time of his death, he was semi-retired but he still acted as consultant to First Independent and ran Miracle Communications which he continued to own.

Michael was of the generation that started at the bottom and worked up the ladder. Coming from a cinema family, film was in his blood and he survived all the changes that beset the industry over the decades. A mod-

est man, always true to his word, he was an example of everything that was good about the British film industry during and after the war. Together with his wife Pamela, he was also that friendly face at festivals and receptions. He is survived by Pamela, his son Martin, his daughter Linda and five grandchildren.

Shelley Whitaker

Michael Myers, film distributor, born October 10, 1928; died February 22, 1998

John Carpenter writes: No other distributor had as much to do with my early works as Michael Myers and Miracle Pictures. He was instrumental in my career as a director, taking *Assault on Precinct 13*, a little low-budget action remake of *Rio Bravo*, and making British critics take it seriously. And he got audiences into theatres.

Then he took on *Halloween*. I'm not sure exactly how he reacted to my naming the serial-killing masked shape after him, but when I last saw him at the British Film Institute in 1994, his warm, gracious smile told me that at least he didn't hold a grudge.

No — I don't think Michael could ever hold a grudge. He was an incredible man. One seldom uses words like integrity and honesty to describe distributors. Nor kindness; for Michael was, of all things, the dearest man at heart. If not for Michael Myers, I would probably be the manager of the Meltdown Motel at Pico and Sepulveda Boulevards.

And, if not for Michael Myers, I would not have known the truth: that there are men of great integrity and unaffected warmth in the movie business. For my money, Michael Myers is at the top of the list.

### A Country Diary

**NORTHUMBERLAND:** Brinkburn Priory is the venue for a festival of early music held in midsummer. The building is also a roost for a colony of 200 Daubenton bats and the festival coincides with their breeding period. There has been concern that music and activity at a critical time could interfere with bat foraging. A survey sponsored by the Brinkburn Music Festival, English Heritage and English Nature over an eight-week period last summer indicated that the festival had no effect on the number of bats emerging from the priory but it did

have an effect on the timing of that emergence. "This year we have agreed to programme the festival so that we can turn the lights off earlier to minimise stress for the bats," said Jane Blackburn, administrator of the Brinkburn Music Festival.

There are five species of bats breeding at the priory — Daubentons, Natterers, Pipistrelles, Whiskered and Long-eared — with an individual Noctule recorded in 1997. So Brinkburn is a premier bat roost in the north-east. In June last year, the Daubentons changed their roost and a

substantial amount of droppings fell onto an inaccessible ledge and on to the organ. "Pipistrelle droppings are like those of a mouse," the custodian told me. "Daubentons are more coarse." Sometimes she picks up babies which have fallen from the roost in the trimmings of a service in an English Heritage pageant. The tiny aquatic under-brown creature was unhurt and crawled to the tips of my fingers. We put it close to the roost for the mother to find as they rarely have more than one baby.

VERONICA HEATH

### CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

AN ARTICLE in The Week, Page 4, February 28, headed, "Squaring up to change at the Apple's core," contained a passage which, after editing, read: "Purchase of the real estate was a pushover. A whole neighbourhood was owned by half-a-dozen old Jewish families who were understandably impressed by the kind of money Disney offered." We apologise to readers who found a completely unintended anti-Semitism in this.

HERE IS the correct version of a correction which appeared incorrectly yesterday: In an article by Tim de Lisle on Page 6, Media, March 2, headed, "Something had to go," an editing error led to a mistaken reference to a former editor of the Times, Charlie Wilson. A paragraph beginning, "It was as if we had to have it [a competi-

tion], it should go on the listings page, where there was less credibility at stake than on the arts page proper. Wilson seemed to accept this." That should have said "Mike Hoy (managing editor) seemed to accept this."

WE CONFUSED readers on March 4 by describing Lord Bingham as Master of the Rolls on Page 3 and Lord Chief Justice on Page 5. The latter is correct. Lord Bingham has been Lord Chief Justice since 1996. The Master of the Rolls is Lord Woolf.

It is the policy of the Guardian to correct errors as soon as possible. Readers may contact the office of the Readers' Editor, Ian Mayes, by telephoning 0171 239 5555, between 11am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. Fax: 0171 239 5897. E-mail: reader@guardian.co.uk

### Death Notices

HAD, Barbara McKay, née Green, on Monday, 2nd March 1998, died peacefully. Secretary of the Movement for the Abolition of the Death Penalty. She was 89. Buried in the cemetery of St. Mary's, London. Family will be held at 11am on Thursday, 12th March 1998 at 12.30 pm at St. Mary's, London. Flowers welcome. Contributions to St. Mary's, London. Tel: 0171-257-2000. Holyrood Road, St. Mary's, London. SW14 9SG.

LAST, Mary, beloved wife of David, mother of Ben, Tom & Charlotte, mother-in-law of Ben, Janet and Karen. Died March 3, 1998, following a heart attack. Cremation at St. Mary's, London. Tel: 0171-257-2000. Holyrood Road, St. Mary's, London. SW14 9SG.

MORRIS, On the 3rd March 1998 peacefully having mother of Tony Morris, will be held at 11am on Thursday, 12th March 1998 at 12.30 pm at St. Mary's, London. Flowers welcome. Contributions to St. Mary's, London. Tel: 0171-257-2000. Holyrood Road, St. Mary's, London. SW14 9SG.

### In Memoriam

CAPELL, Simon, in memory of my beloved son, died March 2nd 1998. Remembered this day and all days.

0171 713 2222. Your announcement, telephone 0171 713 2222. Fax 0171 713 4129 between 9am and 5pm Mon-Fri.







